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THE THREE WITNESSES.



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THE DISPUTED TEXT IN ST. JOHN :

CONSIDERATIONS NEW AND OLD.

BY

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Multæ terricolis linguæ, cœlestibus una.

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PREFACE.

THE issue of a Revised Version of the English New Testament calls fresh attention to some Scriptural controversies that had long been slumbering. Perhaps the most conspicuous and the most daring of the changes which the Committee of Revisers has proposed is the excision of the famous verse—"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are One" (1 John v. 7). They offer not the slightest intimation, even in the margin, that there ever was such a verse in the Bible, the preceding verse being even divided so as to fill the gap in the numbering of the verses through the Chapter.

That excision is simply to decide an old controversy in a new way, without any substantial addition to the old evidence. What the minority in the Committee thought upon

the question, or whether there was a minority, is a detail that is not before the public. Presumably there was a minority who would have voted against the proposal that carried the day; or at least there must have been those who could only acquiesce in it with misgiving and sincere regret. Certainly, when that proposal is submitted to the larger world of English readers for final acceptance in the Bible of this nation, there will be vast numbers who will regard it with dismay, and who will want to know the counter-considerations which in old time led to the retention of the verse, and which, unless evaporated by the discovery of new facts, might fairly so lead now. There are, indeed, no new facts of any moment. Perhaps, however, there are some new ways of looking at the old facts; and it may fairly be doubted whether the true effect of one or two of the leading facts has not been sometimes obscured by the sheer mass of evidence with which the advocates of the disputed verse sought to fortify its claim.

When, however, the old controversy is fairly revived, if there be no new facts, there may at least be a new temper. Those who

take the trouble to acquaint themselves with the past literature of the controversy will no doubt be struck with the asperity of feeling by which it is disfigured. The sneer of Gibbon, the insolence of tone in Porson, the personality in Forster's book, which he even goes out of his way to justify by a maxim of Dr. Johnson's; all these will be felt by the impartial reader of to-day to be simply irrelevancies in the strife. It is a question that is purely literary, antiquarian and scholastic; and as such it must be decided. It is no occasion for treating an opponent, on whichever side he be, as if his view placed him beyond the circle of rational men. All the arguments are by no means upon the same side here. Let that be frankly admitted; and if the recollection of it leads the modern disputants to a calmness of demeanour, which some of their elders so conspicuously lacked; if it generates a modesty of phrase and a courtesy of deference to the rights of an opponent which never were seen in the old controversy before, not only shall we be in a fairer way of arriving at truth, but when our championship is compared with that of the

past, it will be felt that, if we have shown no improvement in knowledge, we have at least effected some improvement in manners.

The main points of the question must be kept steadily in view. The disputed verse is found in no one of the principal manuscripts of the New Testament; but, on the other hand, it was recognized by the African Church before any one of them was written. No protest was ever raised that the African Church had corrupted the Scriptures. In the case of a text of such high importance upon the Trinitarian controversies of the day, it seems certain that such protest would have been raised if there had been room for it. Hence it is argued, the unchallenged use of the African Church is fair proof that there once upon a time existed copies of St. John's Epistle which contained the disputed verse, and which were older than any of those manuscripts to which appeal can now be made.

So at least the older scholars in this country thought. Now, however, the fashion is changed. The line adopted in most modern books is due in no small degree to the great work of Dr. Davidson, entitled, "Biblical

Criticism." He has gone with a certain minuteness into the question, and gives his decision in no hesitating terms. It may however be questioned whether he has altogether done justice to the considerations advanced by his opponents. For instance, he rightly observes that the authority of the Latin Fathers is inferior to that of the Greek Fathers in determining the original text (of the Scriptures), because they commonly used a Latin version current among them, whereas the Greek Fathers used the Greek itself (vol. ii. p. 411). But then he cites at length the Latin Fathers alleged, and leaves altogether unnoticed the Greek writings that are advanced, beyond saying (in that list of names which now is copied from book to book), that the Ancient Synopsis of Holy Scripture ignores it. Let any one study what is said of the Synopsis in the following pages, and then let him say whether it ignores it.

Again, one of the greatest difficulties with which Dr. Davidson has to struggle is the presence of the disputed passage in the Complutensian Polyglott. He says: "We believe therefore that the editors (of the Polyglott)

took the passage, *not* from Greek MSS., but from the modern copies of the Vulgate, pseudo-Jerome, and Thomas Aquinas" (ii. p. 421.) That is, in plain English, they made it up. The Vulgate, Jerome, and Aquinas are all Latin works; and to say that the Complutensian editors took the Greek from them is to say that they made it up. This is a very serious literary charge, and one which, if it could be substantiated, would materially affect the trustworthiness of their entire work.

But there is a mistake here. Dr. Davidson makes a great deal out of a marginal note in which the Complutensian editors are supposed to apologize for the text. "The editors," he says, "have affixed a marginal note to the Greek text—a circumstance very unusual with them, as only three instances of it occur in the whole edition. In this note, the object of which was to secure themselves from blame for printing the verse, we should expect their best defence of it." This is a mistake from beginning to end. The note does not refer to the Greek text at all, but to the Latin version which accompanies it; nor do the editors pretend to offer one word of

defence with regard to their acceptance of the disputed verse in the Greek text. Let the reader consult the note for himself. It is given at large, together with some examination of its purport, in an Appendix which follows these chapters.

It is something like a forlorn hope to defend the verse. The fact that it is absent from all the Greek copies necessarily exposes it to grave suspicion; yet even some of those who have felt this most strongly have also felt that there is much to be said in its favour.

No competent modern advocate would fail to insist upon the fact that Cassiodorus, a writer of the sixth century, quotes the disputed verse ("Complexiones," ed. Florence, 1721, p. 125)—a fact which materially affects the idea that the early acceptance of the verse was confined to Africa, inasmuch as Cassiodorus belonged to the Italian, and not the African, Church. It has often been alleged that the disputed verse was originally a mere gloss, which obtained currency in the African Church owing to the immense influence of Augustine. The quotation by Cassiodorus completely disposes of such a suggestion. It is inconceivable

that within about a century the Roman Church should have adopted an interpolation whose origin could at that time have been so easily traced.

It is, in short, this acceptance with which the opponents of the verse have to deal ; and until that is far more satisfactorily explained than has yet been done, a complete case is not made out against it. It is one thing to say, as the scholars of old time said, that the verse is open to grave suspicion ; but it is quite another thing to wipe out all trace of it from the English Bible.

COLNE ENGAIN, ESSEX,

February, 1883.

I. JOHN V.

Authorized Version.

4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.

5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

Revised Version.

4 For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, *even* our faith.

5 And who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood.

7 And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth.

8 For there are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and the three agree in one.

9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for the witness of God is this, that he hath borne witness concerning his Son.

It will be observed that the Revised

Version entirely omits the seventh verse of the Authorized Version, and makes up the required number of verses by splitting the sixth verse of the Authorized Version into two.

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THE THREE WITNESSES.



CHAPTER I.

RISE AND GROWTH OF THE QUESTION.

It is not a little singular that throughout all the early centuries of the Christian Era, there are no traces of what can properly be called a controversy about the disputed verse in St. John's First Epistle. The actual practice, indeed, of Christendom was by no means uniform upon the question ; some Churches received the verse into their Scriptures, while others did not. Yet the question was never debated. The interests that presented themselves for discussion in ancient Christian

literature are both numerous and diversified; but the whole field is searched in vain for any light upon the question which, since the Reformation, has been so frequently, so eagerly, and sometimes so fiercely discussed. Here and there, indeed, a remark is to be found in the works of some ancient champion of the Faith, to the effect that the copies of the Scripture were understood to differ at this point; but no single writer dwells upon the question either on this side or on that. Such allusions are just enough to show that the writer was not unaware of the possibility of an argument; but they do not prohibit us from feeling that the ancients were content almost to ignore a question which the moderns have invested with quite a literature of its own.

It was not, in fact, till the early days of printing that there arose what may be fairly

called the controversy upon the subject. The passage first appeared in print in that famous monument of early Biblical typography, the Complutensian Polyglott. It was at once challenged by a scholar of the first rank, Erasmus, who had not inserted the passage in his own edition of the New Testament. Erasmus, however, was so far influenced by the replies which he received from the Complutensian editors, that in a later edition of his work he himself inserted the disputed passage.

From that day to the present the question has never been at rest. The fact that the disputed verse has a place in what has become known as the "received text," obviously carries little or no weight. The question is, what right had the verse to be there. It is, in legal phrase, altogether a question of Title. True, the verse has been in possession all these years; but, on the other hand, it has

not been in undisputed possession. So long, indeed, as it was a mere question of literary speculation, the unlearned world might well take no very keen interest in the matter ; but when it is formally proposed to take the necessary steps for ousting the passage from its ancient tenancy, many of those who were unconcerned spectators before, will feel called upon to acquaint themselves in some degree with the merits of the question in debate.

Without entering into unnecessary details, it will be enough here to state the leading grounds* upon which the two sides in the dispute have respectively grounded their opinions. Those, then, who believe the verse to be spurious, rely chiefly on the fact that it is not to be found in any one single manuscript

* Internal considerations, drawn from the structure of St. John's argument in this part of the Epistle, are here designedly omitted.

of undoubtedly high antiquity ; and, further, on the alleged fact that the verse is not noticed by any one of the Greek ecclesiastical writers.* The champions of the verse, on the contrary, while admitting in whole or in part the weight of these considerations, rely on the fact that the verse is found in the most ancient Latin version of the Scriptures which was current in the African Church—a version which is of far earlier date than any of the manuscripts, and than the bulk of the Greek writers. It is found there ; and its right to be there was in antiquity never challenged, though the atmosphere was overcharged with controversies of that particular class of which the verse in question has been held to be decisive. Here is a fact, say the advocates of the verse, which cannot be got over ; and any verdict

* For the arguments deducible from this fact, see Chapter IV.

which leaves that fact unexplained, not by ingenious conjecture, but by historic evidence, is a verdict which does not do justice to all the phenomena of the case, and therefore is not in accordance with true scientific method.

It has been said that the advocates of the disputed verse admit in whole or in part the weight of the plea that it is unnoticed by any of the early Greek ecclesiastical writers. It may, however, be fairly questioned if full justice has been done under this head. Amid a bewildering mass of other arguments, there have been just two passages* alleged from Greek writings which show that the plea is not altogether sound. If, in short, these two passages be admitted in evidence, then it simply is not true that Greek literature knew nothing of the disputed verse. Too often, indeed, the due effect of those passages has

* See Chapter VI.

been obscured by discussions about their own authorship, as to whether they are from the pen of Athanasius or not. It does not really matter, for the present cause, whether they belong to Athanasius or to some one else. It is enough that they are admitted on all hands to come from an early Greek writer. That is of itself enough to disarm the suspicion that St. John's verse was only a local peculiarity of the Latin-speaking Churches, and enough to warrant us in the attempt to disengage the two passages which cite it from the mass of precarious and questionable matter with which they have too commonly been overlaid.

CHAPTER II.

BALANCE OF AUTHORITY—ANCIENT *VERSUS* MODERN.

BEFORE we allow the decision of eminent scholars in our own day to reverse the verdict of the past, we must compare them with the no less eminent scholars of the past. What qualifications have they which the scholars of the past had not? What fresh branches of knowledge are in their grasp, which were not yet within the reach of the scholars of the past? How are they in a better position than the men of old time for guiding the world to a right decision upon the question that is at issue?

The answer to these questions is of the most meagre kind. We have one more great manuscript of the Bible than our forefathers had ; and that is all. With that single exception, everything that is known to us about the claims of the disputed verse was equally known to them. And, with the whole of the evidence of to-day before them—the Sinaitic manuscript alone excepted—they decided, as a rule, in favour of the verse. Beveridge, for example, who was one of the most learned men in ecclesiastical research that ever graced the English bench of bishops, indicates the ground of his favourable decision in very few words :—

“ Though this place of Scripture (1 John, v. 7) be not extant in many ancient manuscripts, nor indeed in many ancient translations, yet in the days of Arius, the grand oppugner of this truth, about three hundred

and thirty years after Christ, it was never so much as questioned, and many of the ancient fathers quote it. Which plainly shows that it was then received as canonical Scripture, and therefore not to be questioned by us now.”*

Mill, again, the editor of the famous folio edition of the Greek Testament, to whom all subsequent scholars have been so largely indebted, sifted the question with an exhaustiveness which has left little for others to add. He knew all the great manuscripts, except the recently discovered Sinaitic, that men know now ; he knew all the disadvantages under which the disputed text labours ; he knew the passages of the Fathers where it might have been expected to be quoted, but still does not appear ; he even formulates the

* “The Doctrine of the Church of England consonant to Scripture, Reason, and Fathers.” Oxf. 1840. Vol. i. p. 86.

evidence for and against the verse with a calm impartiality which would do credit to the summing-up of a law lord in the High Court of Justice ; and, when all considerations have been brought to a focus upon the point in debate, he decides in favour of the verse—that it was in the original autograph of St. John's Epistle,* and, therefore, notwithstanding its vicissitudes of fortune, that it is properly entitled to the place which it holds in the English Bible.

The truth of the matter, it must be admitted, is not to be reached by a mere array of names, however eminent, upon one side or the other. But there is a fashion in opinion as in things of lesser moment. And just now

* Mill's theory is that the disputed verse was contained in the original autograph and the early copies of the Epistle, but that it dropped out by the negligence of transcribers, owing to the similarity of the words in the adjoining verse.

it has become the fashion to speak as if it were not possible for those who would lay claim to any intellectual rank to have a doubt about the spuriousness of the disputed verse. Chance phrases dropped in a Review, speak in a tone almost of disdain about the claims of the verse being such as no scholar would any longer think of maintaining.* It therefore becomes of consequence to show that the fashion once was different ; that the scholars of a former day, with opportunities of judging in no material respect inferior to our own, thought otherwise ; and therefore that these who would reluctantly consent to the erasure of the verse from the Scripture are after all not in such bad intellectual company as these contemptuous phrases seem to imply. An earlier writer upon the subject obviously felt the force of this consideration, and accordingly

* See, for example, *Edinburgh Review* for April, 1881.

introduced his work with a dedication in this form : " To the illustrious memories of Archbishops Wake and Secker ; of Bishops Bull and Pearson, Beveridge and Atterbury, Barlow and Huet, Gastrell and Horsley, Burgess and Middleton ; and of Mill, Bengel and Knittel."* All of these are names of high intellectual rank, and some of them are names of men who were experts in criticism and whose special department was the investigation of literary claims. It is no slight testimony to the disputed verse that it commanded the support of such names as these ; and it is no disparagement to the distinguished scholars who have pronounced against the verse, to say that it can enumerate among its adherents the names of men who were no less distinguished and no less competent than themselves.

* Forster on " The Three Heavenly Witnesses."

It appears then that, with substantially the same materials before them, the scholars of old time and the scholars of to-day have arrived at two opposite conclusions upon the question that is before us. How, it may be asked, is this to be explained? The main cause of this divergence of judgment it is probably not difficult to detect. The determination of the New Testament Text depends, it will be remembered, both upon the direct evidence of the ancient manuscript copies that have survived to us, and upon certain other collateral facts, such as the acceptance of this or that reading in the Christian Churches; the citations that are made or are not made; and others of the same class. It is upon the relative importance that a man attaches to these two classes of evidence respectively—the direct and the collateral—that his judgment upon the question of St.

John's disputed text in great measure depends. The disposition of the present day is to attach less weight to the collateral considerations than was attached to them in former days, and it is probably to this change of attitude that the change of judgment is to be traced.

This fact it is which may properly make us cautious in accepting the proposed erasure. If there had been an advance of knowledge, the case would be entirely changed. If some facts had come to light which were unknown to our forefathers, we could not do otherwise than accept the reversal of the decision at which they arrived. There are, however, no such facts. For all practical purposes there is nothing new. A few more manuscripts have been collated, and that is all. There is no branch of the argument that was not before Mill, and Beveridge, and Bengel equally with ourselves. A further

change of an intellectual fashion would suffice to bring their opinion once again into favour. The opposite decision has about it elements that are too obviously ephemeral to be safely trusted as final, and those who are disposed to combat it may feel that they are well kept in countenance by the fact of being on the side of the scholars of the past, if they are at issue with many of the present.

The treatment that has been accorded to the last twelve verses of the Gospel according to St. Mark may well show the English people how backward they ought fairly to be in accepting the erasure of a passage in the Bible. In thus instituting a comparison between the disputed passage at the end of the Gospel and the disputed verse in the Epistle it is not meant that the details of the evidence are precisely the same in the two cases. Far from it. But the parallel consists in this, that both

of them fell under suspicion owing to a deficiency of direct manuscript support. For years past the chances of survival seemed to be growing less in the case of the passage in the Gospel. Ever since the rise of that deepened, and, as some think it, that exaggerated regard for a few famous manuscripts, the current of opinion amongst scholars had been steadily setting against the admission of the passage to its place in a revised Bible ; and it is probably not too much to say that but for the timely publication of Dr. Burgon's masterly work upon the subject it would hardly have retained its place in the version that has been issued by the Committee of Revisers. The retention of the passage is the best compliment that could have been paid to a work, which is one of the most scholarly and most permanent contributions that modern English Theology has received. But the influence of

the work reaches beyond its immediate sphere ; for it shows how the appearance of even a single volume may change the opinions that are in fashion upon the claims of a disputed passage of the Bible.

CHAPTER III.

LEADING DIFFICULTIES—SILENCE OF GREEK WRITERS.

THE really formidable task that lies upon the counsel for the defence is to offer some kind of an explanation of the almost fatal silence of the ancient Greek writers. In the first centuries of Christian history they were engaged in incessant controversies with those who impugned the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity. If the disputed verse in St. John's Epistle at that time formed a part of the Greek Scriptures, here, it is felt, was a verse which exactly suited their argument, and which they might triumphantly have cited to

the summary confusion of their opponents.* Yet, it is alleged, they one and all never cite it; and the fact that they uniformly do not cite it, when it would have so admirably suited their purpose, must be accepted as proof positive that they did not acknowledge it.

This uniform silence—if indeed it be uniform—is perhaps the most ugly fact with which the defence has to deal. It is even more overwhelming than the general absence of the verse from the few manuscript copies of the New Testament that have survived to our time. The question is, Can anything be urged in explanation of it? Can any considerations be advanced which may fairly

* Mill in his folio edition of the Greek Testament quotes all the passages of both Greek and Latin writers, where the disputed verse, though it would have been most opportune, still does not appear. He nevertheless is a defender of the verse.

relieve the pressure of it? Can any reasons be imagined which, in days when religious controversy was even more heated and more truculent than anything known to modern experience, might have led the Catholic party with a common instinct to avoid the verse?

Either the verse was contained in their copies of the New Testament or it was not. Mill, after a judicial consideration of all the phenomena of the question, comes to the conclusion that it was not. He thinks that it was in the original autograph of the Epistle, and the early copies of it, but that, through an accident of a kind familiar to all who have considered the transcription of manuscript, it dropped out by the negligence of transcribers, owing to the similarity of the words in immediate juxtaposition with it. If that be so, the troublesome question before us is at an end. The Greek doctors did not quote the

verse as Scriptural proof of their position, because, owing to an accident, which for their argument may seem to be little short of fatal, the verse was simply not known to them as Scripture.

If, however, the verse was contained in their copies of the Scripture, why did they not quote it ?

First of all, by way of extenuation, a fact may be pleaded which does not seem to have been sufficiently regarded in previous discussions of the question before us—the fact, I mean, that comparatively slight notice seems to have been taken by the Greek Fathers, of the seven Catholic Epistles of St. James, St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude. As to why this was so, various reasons will probably occur to those who are professionally acquainted with the subject ; but the fact remains that, on a general survey of early

Greek Christian literature, the quotations from these Catholic Epistles are, even in proportion to their length, very much more rare than quotations from, say, the Epistles of St. Paul and certain other books of Holy Scripture. The copious indexes of Scriptural quotations, which generally accompany the large editions of Greek Fathers, furnish us with a ready means of arriving at something like an arithmetical estimate of this proportion. In St. Gregory of Nazianzum, for example, who might from the nature of his argument have been eminently expected to cite the disputed verse, and who actually does once cite the verse next to it, there are in the Cologne edition no less than seven folio pages of references to Scripture in his works; yet, out of all this mass, there are but seven references to the whole of the Catholic Epistles.

Again, in the Benedictine edition of the

works of St. Basil the Great, published at Paris in 1730, out of a mass of Scripture references, covering fifteen and a half folio pages, in vol. i. there are but four citations from the 1st Epistle of St. John; out of sixteen folio pages in vol. ii. there are but two such citations; and out of four folio pages in vol. iii. there is but one solitary passage cited from the whole of the Catholic Epistles—viz., 1 John iii. 24 :—"Hereby we know that He abideth in us by the Spirit, which He hath given us."

In the Benedictine edition of St. Chrysostom, published at Paris in 1738, out of no less than fifty-seven folio pages of references, there are but four citations.

In the Benedictine edition of Irenæus (Paris, 1710) out of thirteen pages of references there are but three citations.

In the Cologne edition of St. Athanasius,

out of thirty-four folio pages covered with reference to Scripture, there are but thirty citations from the whole of the Catholic Epistles.

In the Benedictine edition of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, published at Paris in 1720, there are but fifteen citations out of eleven and a half folio pages covered with citations.

In the Paris edition of Justin Martyr (1742) there is but one solitary citation in seven folio pages devoted to the subject.

When the inquiry had advanced thus far, it seemed unnecessary to proceed in computing further in the works of individual Greek Fathers; so by way of conclusion the writer turned to a volume or two of Gallandiu's famous *Bibliotheca Patrum*, and found the same impression confirmed. In volume i. out of fourteen folio pages of Scripture references, there is but one citation of our Epistle; and in

volume ii. out of fourteen folio pages of such references, there is not a single one.

Quite consistent with this paucity of citation is the fact that the Greek theologians do not seem either to have preached or written so freely upon the group of the Catholic Epistles as they did upon some other parts of Holy Scripture. St. Chrysostom, for example, while he has his Homilies upon all the other Epistles of the New Testament, has none upon these ; and Theodoret, while he has a Commentary occupying a whole folio volume upon the other epistles, yet takes no notice whatever of these.

The use then which early Greek writers made of the group of Catholic Epistles is, it appears, comparatively slender. There were, no doubt, some causes at work to generate this uniform neglect on the part of writers so widely separated by time, by locality, by

circumstance, by personal temperament, by almost everything in short except the accident of language and the impulse of a common faith. What those causes may have been is fair matter of inference or of conjecture. But it is at least curious to observe that the comparative silence of the early Greek writers is not altogether without a parallel in modern Theology. Every student of Scripture knows that monographs upon any one of the Catholic Epistles are far more rare than those which are printed upon most other parts of the New Testament. There will be twenty writers in English or in German upon an Epistle of St. Paul's where there is not one upon, say, the Epistle of St. James. The scantiness, therefore, of the notice which seems in ancient days to have been bestowed upon the Catholic Epistles while it may be curious, cannot at least surprise us. But as a mere question of mathe-

matical probability, the chances of any particular verse in those Epistles being quoted are enormously diminished by the fact of that general scantiness of reference—a fact, we plead, which ought to be remembered in extenuation, though not of course in solution, of the difficulty created by the non-citation of the disputed text in the course of discussions where it might so naturally have been expected to appear.

CHAPTER IV.

LEADING DIFFICULTIES—TRUE CONTROVERSIAL VALUE OF THE VERSE.

BUT there is another plea to be advanced of an entirely different character. The difficulty, let it be remembered, is that the Greek Fathers do not quote the disputed verse in their arguments about the Trinity, when, it is alleged, it would have gone a long way towards settling the question at issue between the Catholic party and their opponents. There are, however, some considerations about the verse which would have made it in some respects an eminently undesirable verse to quote in answer to those particular opponents whom they had to combat. It is

not difficult to see that it might easily have embarrassed their argument. A sagacious advocate will always avoid the suggestion of a point which in one of its aspects is indeed in his own favour, but which, by a little adroitness on the part of his opponent, might easily be turned against himself. This is precisely the case with the disputed verse when viewed in connection with the verse that follows it. The particular point of doctrine at issue between the Catholic and the heretical party was whether the Three Persons in the Trinity were of the same nature or no. The Catholic said they were, the Arian said they were not. He would allow that they were of a similar nature, but he denied the sameness. If now a Catholic Doctor had adduced St. John's disputed text in support of his position ; if he had pleaded that the Three Persons in the Trinity were

of one and the same nature, because the Scripture said, "There are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one," what would have been the immediate result? Yes, the Arian would have cried, but please to continue the quotation: "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood, and these three agree in one." The parallelism, he would have urged, told altogether in his favour. The sacred writer adduces two groups of three, and as the three mentioned in the second group—the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood—are unquestionably not of one and the same nature, so by all the laws of thought he was entitled to the benefit of the contention that the Three mentioned in the first group were regarded by the sacred writer as being severally of a different nature likewise.

The Catholic doctors seem to have been quite alive to the possibility of this unfavourable turn being given to the argument. The passage of St. Gregory of Nazianzum, which has been so often quoted adversely to the disputed verse, betrays the consciousness of this. He cites the eighth verse of St. John's chapter, but takes no notice of the seventh, which is in dispute. Barely stated, his omission constitutes one of the most formidable considerations against the verse, but any one who takes the trouble to read a page or two in this part of St. Gregory's Oration will see that the disputed verse would have been entirely foreign to the point which at the moment St. Gregory was enforcing. His adversary, somewhat unfortunately for himself, had alleged that the usages of language did not admit of things being counted together, unless there was some community

of nature among them. What about St. John? replies the Orator. "When he says in the Catholic Epistles that there are three who bear witness—the Spirit, the water, the blood—does he appear to you to be trifling? First indeed because he has ventured to reckon together things which are not of the same nature—a process which you allow only in the case of things that are of the same nature?"*

Is not this a clue to the kind of use which St. Gregory knew would have been made of the disputed verse if he had drawn it into the controversy at all? The Catholic position, which he could quite well substantiate from other parts of Scripture, would have been impeded, embarrassed, and obscured by a subsidiary discussion as to whether the Three Witnesses classed by St. John in the same

* Greg. Naz. Orat. 37 p. 603, ed. Colon. 1680.

category, were meant to be regarded as of the same nature or of different natures ; whether in short, the parallel between the group of heavenly witnesses and the group of earthly witnesses was to be allowed as including a diversity of their several natures or not.

In point of fact it comes to this—that the disputed verse, if it could be divorced from its context, would have been the strongest possible argument for the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity ; but that if it be read in connection with the verse that follows, it is capable of being turned very seriously to the disadvantage of that doctrine. It is indeed affirmed by Aquinas that full advantage was taken of this consideration on the part of the Arian heretics ; that they attempted to improve the parallel which the sacred writer had instituted between the two groups of heavenly and earthly witnesses ; and that with this

view they intruded into the Latin text the second clause, corresponding to our "These three agree in One," which did not exist in the best copies. "Their object," says Aquinas, "was to prove that, in the view of Scripture, the agreement between the Father, Word, and Holy Ghost was the same as the agreement between Spirit, Water, and Blood—an agreement, that is to say, not of nature or essence, but only of love and consent."*

A writer, whose name carries great influence, in speaking of the disputed text being only found in Latin manuscripts,

* See the famous note in the margin of the Complutensian Polyglott. On the principle of verifying all quotations, I took the trouble to compare Hartwell Horne's transcription of it. Passing over a few inaccuracies of orthography and punctuation, he has transcribed it quite correctly, save only that he has mistaken for *ut* the abbreviation which represents the modern *viz.*, and thereby spoiled his Latin.

recently says, that "this cannot possibly be set against the fact that in the Arian controversy none of the Greek Fathers quote a passage so very apposite."* Why, it was the opinion of Grotius that, so far from being apposite to the argument of the Greek Fathers, the text was introduced by the Arians, so that from the analogy of the adjoining verse they might argue that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost were one only in consent and not in essence.†

When, therefore, the defence is asked, why, if the disputed verse be genuine, it was never quoted by the Greek Fathers in their arguments on the Trinity, we now have materials for a reply. We say that the verse

* "The Bearing of the New Revision on the Teaching of the Church." By the Rev. M. F. Sadler.

† The Note of Grotius is printed at length in Appendix III.

is anything but one which would well have served their purpose ; that, owing to the consort with which it is yoked, it would have been on the contrary most mischievous to the kind of argument which they had to sustain ; that it is a weapon which would have been most easily wrested from their grasp and brandished against themselves ; and that to have arrayed the verse in the lines of their defence would have been simply a blunder in advocacy, which happily they were too sagacious to commit.

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CHAPTER V.

COUNTER-DIFFICULTIES.

IN the foregoing chapters it has been frankly admitted that there are certain difficulties with which the defence has to deal, and which must in fact be fatal to its prospect of success, unless they can to some extent at least be accounted for and explained. But it has been too much left out of sight that there are also difficulties of the same kind that attend upon the indictment of the disputed verse.

The first of such difficulties is this—How did it get into Greek? It is commonly traced by its opponents to a Latin source in Africa.

“The seventh verse,” says one,* “originated in a Latin gloss upon the eighth verse.” “The Editors of the Complutensian Polyglott,” says another,† “inserted it upon the authority of the Latin Vulgate version.” This is all very well. But how did the verse get into Greek? Who put it into Greek? Where was it put into Greek?‡ Where does it make its first appearance in Greek? We are bound to have some answers to questions of this kind. We actually have such answers in other similar cases. There are other spurious clauses and expressions current in our printed

* Bp. Marsh.

† Hartwell Horne. Introd. Pt. II. ch. iv. s. 5.

‡ Dr. Davidson, indeed, says (“Bib. Crit.,” ii. 423), “The entire verse appeared for the first time in Greek in a Greek version of the Latin Acts of the Lateran Council held in 1215.” Yes; but a portion of it, at least, appeared earlier than that in the Greek *Dispute against Arius*. Would he have us suppose that the editors of the Lateran Council forged the Greek?

Testaments of which we are plainly told that they were translated from the Latin into Greek by Erasmus!* Why then have we nothing of the kind here?

A second point which must be faced in the case for the prosecution of the verse is this. The theory adopted by the prosecution, it will be remembered, is that the verse was foisted upon the Latin copies of the Scriptures used in Africa. But then how was it that no single writer of the early centuries over the whole face of Christendom protests against the intrusion? It was not that the African Scriptures were unknown to the rest of the world. On the contrary, they were the very focus of attention for all Latin-speaking Christians. The early Latin translation of the Scriptures was made, it is well known,

* See the article *New Testament* in Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible," p. 522.

not for Italians, but for residents in Africa. It was the newly-discovered inaccuracy of these African Scriptures that was the very source and spring of all St. Jerome's great labours upon the text and the translation of the Bible. It was these African Scriptures which led him to use those phrases in favour of a revision which have been, often so unsuspectingly, revived in our own time—that the Church, in her existing version, was not presenting the Word of God so faithfully as she might. If, therefore, no notice was taken in early Christendom of an alleged irregularity in the African Scriptures, it was not that these Scriptures escaped notice by virtue of any relative insignificance ; it was not that any general indifference was felt as to what the Church in Africa might think or use. And if it were true, as the theory of the prosecution demands, that, in reliance upon even

the greatest names amongst her doctors, the African Church had gradually admitted into her copies of the Scriptures a very important verse which was not really Scripture at all, it is little less than incredible that the mistake should have been allowed to pass without one single phrase of indignant protest on the part of all the rest of Christendom.*

* See Appendix II.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ALLEGED REFERENCES TO THE DISPUTED VERSE IN GREEK WRITERS.

THE real strength of the case for the impeachment of the disputed verse lies not alone in the very grave fact of its general absence from the older Greek manuscripts, but in the alleged fact that it is never referred to by any of the old Greek writers, the Latin portions of early Christendom seeming to be alone conscious of its existence. It seems almost impossible to argue in the teeth of such allegations as these. If, however, it could be shown by reasonable inference that the verse was known in its Greek dress to even one solitary Greek writer of early days, then it is

obvious that the prospects of the argument will be entirely changed. Then the defence, instead of standing abashed and confuted by the silence of all the rest of such writers upon the subject, would be entitled to plead that that silence may have been due to other causes besides the non-existence of the verse. Then, too, it is not entirely a forlorn hope to face its absence from the Manuscripts. They are after all but very few in number, but the scanty survivals of a vast multitude of sacred copies, possibly far more accurate and more highly finished than any of themselves. Under what influences they were made, we know not. Where they were made we know not. That every one of them is corrupt in some point or other, we know. If the preponderance of their evidence were paramount, then such a narrative as the Agony in the Garden would have to be erased from the

pages of the Bible. Supposing, then, that our verse should prove to have been known to even one early Greek writer, the presumption would be about these few surviving manuscripts, that just as in the passage of the Agony, they are all at fault but one, so in the disputed verse before us we have a case in which even that one has joined the error of the rest.

Now, there are just two passages in old Greek literature which seem to betray an acquaintance with the disputed verse of St. John's Epistle. They are the very keystone of the argument for confuting the position that the verse is due to Latin sources. It is well, therefore, to separate them from the mass of other quotations amid which they sometimes have been buried, to the great detriment of the conclusions that naturally arise out of them.

The first passage consists in a few words

in the Greek Synopsis of Holy Scripture, which is printed in the folio editions of several of the Greek Fathers. The author of the Synopsis gives a summary of the contents, though not in their strict order, of every book in the Bible, each book having a separate section to itself. Towards the close of the section on the First Epistle of St. John he says that John declares—

“That he who loveth not his neighbour is not worthy of his calling, and cannot be called Christ’s; and he shows the oneness of the Son with the Father, and that he who denies the Son neither has the Father.”

It is this remarkable phrase of oneness as applied to the Persons of the Trinity that is found in the disputed verse, and if that be expunged, is found nowhere else in the Epistle.

A Cambridge man, with one of the most

eminent degrees of our day, recently wrote to inquire of the present writer whether the author of the Synopsis could have meant that St. John's general teaching showed the oneness, or whether he showed this specifically in his Epistle. In the latter case, this correspondent observed, the passage from the Synopsis is most important in its bearing on the genuineness of the disputed text. Undoubtedly it is most important. And that there may be no mistake in the minds of the reader, a translation of the whole of the section relating to St. John's First Epistle is here presented. Experience shows that there are comparatively few who will take the trouble to unearth it in the folios of a library.

FROM THE GREEK SYNOPSIS.

Fourth of John.*

Thus, also, this is called ; since also John the Evangelist writes also his Epistle, putting in mind those who had already believed in the Lord. And first, indeed, as in the Gospel so also in this Epistle, he speaks as a theologian about the Word, showing that He is always in God, and teaching that the Father is Light, in order that we may even thus know that the Word is a radiance from Him. But, speaking as a theologian, he declares that the mystery with us is not new, but even from the beginning it ever exists, but now has been manifested in the Lord, who is Life Eternal and very God. And, moreover, he assigns the cause of the coming of the Word and of His appearing, saying that it is to destroy the works of the devil,

* Fourth, *sc.* in the group of the Seven Catholic Epistles.

and to free us from death, and that we might know the Father and the Son Himself, Jesus Christ, our Lord. He writes accordingly to every age, to children, to young men, to old men, that God has become known, while the power of the devil has been conquered in the overthrow of death. Further, for the rest, through the whole Epistle he teaches concerning love; wishing that we should love one another, since even Christ loved us. He discourses then of the difference between fear and love, and between the children of God and the children of the devil, and of a sin unto death and a sin not unto death, and of the difference between spirits. And, finally, he distinguishes what sort of a spirit is of God, and what is of error; and when we become known as the children of God and when of the devil; and for what sort of a sin we ought to pray; and that he who loveth

not his neighbour is not worthy of his calling and cannot be called Christ's. And the Oneness, moreover, of the Son with the Father he shows; and that he who denies the Son neither has the Father. But he decides in this Epistle, saying that there is a peculiarity of Antichrist, and that it is this—the saying, that Jesus Himself is not the Christ, so that, as He is not, the liar says that he is himself Christ. But, through the whole Epistle, he exhorts believers not to despond, if they are hated in the world; but rather to rejoice, because the hatred of the world shows that the believers have removed from this world, and afterwards belong to the heavenly citizenship. And in the end of the Epistle, moreover, again he puts them in mind, saying that the Son of God is Eternal Life and very God, both in order that we may serve Him and keep ourselves from idols.

Porson, in his opposition to the disputed verse, seems rightly to have felt that the alleged allusion to it in the Synopsis, if indeed it were an allusion, would be fatal to the view which he advocated. He accordingly denied the allusion. He was, however, bound to find some passage in St. John's Epistle to which the Synoptist's statement could be referred. That statement, it must be remembered, is specifically this :—

“The One-ness moreover of the Son with the Father he (sc. the writer of the Epistle) shows.”

Porson affirmed that this referred to chapter ii. verse 23 of the Epistle, which, in the Authorized English Version, stands thus :—

“Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father ; but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.”

This, however, seems totally inadequate as

an explanation of the allusion which is before us. To begin with, there is no explicit mention of the "One-ness" in this verse. And, it might be argued, St. John does anything but "show the One-ness," by his statement in this verse. There are actually ways of taking these statements which are quite compatible with a denial of the One-ness. An Arian, who denied the One-ness, certainly had his own way of "acknowledging" the Son, and would have argued that St. John was very far from having asserted the "One-ness" in the verse which Porson cites.

With all deference, therefore, for one of the greatest names of modern Greek scholarship, we seem fairly entitled to urge that the verse which Porson cites as an explanation of the Synoptist's allusion is inadequate, and that there is no verse in St. John's Epistle which explicitly affirms the One-ness of the Son with

the Father, except the verse which it is now proposed to expunge.

Porson, indeed, himself felt that there was room for questioning the adequacy of his reference. If you object, he says, that St. John ii. 23 does not teach the Unity of the Son with the Father, you must prove—

(1) That the author of the “Synopsis” means unity of essence, not of consent.

(2) That no ancient writer would or could interpret it in that manner.—(Letters, p. 213.)

This lends colour to a consideration which is advanced in another page.* If the edge of the disputed text can be so easily turned as (1) implies, is not that of itself a sufficient reason why the Fathers refrained from quoting it in their argument against Arians?

As the Synopsis of Holy Scripture holds so prominent a place in the considerations which

* See Chapter IV.

are here advanced, it may be convenient to record a few particulars of what has been thought and said of its origin.

Sometimes it has been printed amongst the undoubted works of the great Athanasius (fourth century). This is the case with the German edition of his works printed in folio at Cologne.

The French (Benedictine) editors, after citing their reasons, place the Synopsis not amongst the “spurious,” but amongst the “doubtful” works of Athanasius, obviously not considering the position established which is afterwards taken up by Porson.

Porson affirms that the Synopsis is generally allowed to be “spurious,” and adds that it is variously ascribed to Euthalius (fifth century), Sophronius (fifth century), and a second Athanasius, not the Alexandrian prelate, but a contemporary of Euthalius.

In any case, it will be observed, the Synopsis is allowed to be the production of a very ancient Greek writer, and this is all that is required by our argument.

It is rightly added by Porson that the Synopsis "May be found in Œcumenius, without any author's name." That, however, is no disparagement of the work. Porson does not seem to have been aware that it was a practice of editors to prefix the section of the Synopsis to commentaries by the Fathers on the Epistle, together, indeed, with another Greek abstract of contents. They are both given, for example, "without any author's name," in the Venice folio edition of Theophylact.

II. The other passage of a Greek writer, which betrays an acquaintance with the disputed text, is found in the so-called "Disputation with Arius," which is usually classed

amongst the works of Athanasius. It stands thus :—

“But the absolving and quickening and sanctifying laver, without which no one shall see the kingdom of heaven—is it not given to the faithful in the Thrice-Blessed Name? And in addition to all these things, John says, ‘And the Three are One.’”

Here again it is really immaterial to the present argument whether this work be accepted as a genuine work of St. Athanasius or not. It is enough that it is the work of an early Greek writer, for then it disposes of the idea that the disputed text was known only to the Latins.

Upon the question of the actual authorship of the work from which our citation is made, there have been divergent opinions expressed; but no one has ever thought of denying its antiquity. Some of the editors indeed accept

it as a *bonâ fide* work of the great Athanasius. The Benedictine editors think it a colloquy not with Arius, but with one of the followers of Arius; and the worst that even Porson can say, of it is that, "In general, I believe, it is attributed to Maximus, who lived in the seventh century."* A loose statement of this kind is really all that is possible as to the authorship of the work in question. There are no grounds, except more or less precarious considerations of style and contents, upon which to base a decision. But while the actual authorship may always remain a doubtful question, the antiquity of the work cannot be disputed; and there seems to be no way of evading the conclusion at which Mill arrives,† when he says that in the very early

* "Letters to Travis," p. 215.

† Mill, "N. Test." p. 742. Ed. Oxf. 1707.

days of this author there must have been copies of Scripture which contained the disputed text.

NOTE.

On the theory that the work under notice is by an imitator of the great Athanasius, a curious question arises which may not be without influence upon our ideas as to why St. John's text has not been much quoted—How is it that while genuine Fathers avoided quoting the disputed text, an imitator did not shrink?

CHAPTER VII.

A PARALLEL IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE argument for the disputed verse in St. John's Epistle must necessarily stand upon its own merits. But it is at least curious to observe that the question has a parallel, which does not seem hitherto to have been noticed, in the printed text of the Old Testament. It lies in one of the byways of the Hebrew Scriptures little trodden by ordinary readers. Hence it will come as a surprise to many to learn that in our English Bible, and indeed in many other Bibles, there are actually two verses which have no equivalent in our printed Hebrew Bibles. They are found in the account

of the cities which were given to the Levites in Joshua xxi. 36, 37 :—

“And out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer with her suburbs, and Jahazah with her suburbs,

“Kedemoth with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs ; four cities.”

These verses are so far unlike the disputed passage in St. John's Epistle as that they are not verses of any exceptional interest for the statements conveyed in them, or of any controversial value. But the parallel consists in this, that while the evidence from surviving manuscripts is overwhelmingly against them, yet on other grounds many eminent scholars have concluded that once upon a time there must have been manuscripts in existence which contained the verses.

The Massorah is commonly, and indeed justly, appealed to as having protected the

integrity of the text of the Old Testament, and so given us fewer variations of reading than we have to contend with in the New Testament. The Massorah, however, is in the present case entirely against the two verses which are under notice. This testimony it bears in a singular way. There is a certain Hebrew particle, which cannot be translated into English, occurring with the names of the several cities that are enumerated in this chapter of Joshua. The Massorah, after its usual fashion, has counted them, and it more than once affirms that this particle occurs twenty-eight times throughout the passage. The statement is quite correct, as the passage stands in the printed Hebrew Bibles; but the particle occurs more than twenty-eight times, if the two verses, which the English Bible has adopted from Chronicles, be admitted.

On the one hand then the textual evidence is against the verses, but on the other hand the chapter itself affirms that twelve cities were allotted to the sons of Merari, and the number cannot be made up without the cities named in the disputed verses. Most of the English commentators seem to have considered this fact conclusive in their favour. An attempt, indeed, to meet this particular difficulty appears in the answer which was long ago made by Haya, the famous head of the Babylonian school of Biblical research. He was asked about the question, and he replied simply that, "Though the four cities required to make up the number were not mentioned here, yet they were given in the *Chronicles*."*

* The answer may be seen in the original Chaldaized Hebrew in the Commentary of Radak, which is printed in most of the Rabbinic Bibles.

The position is well summarized in the Hebrew note of Radak, which it may be convenient to translate here: "There are copies in which these two disputed verses are found, but I never saw them in any old and correct copy; however, in some of them the amendment is made." The "old and correct" copies referred to by the Hebrew writer are probably to be understood as being relatively old; old in the same sense as our most famous copies of the New Testament are old; older, that is to say, than anything else that had survived, but still leaving a vast interval between themselves and the very earliest autograph copies of the Sacred Books. The lapse of time had been sufficient for the intrusion of error into the text, and when Radak speaks of "correct" copies, he probably means copies that had been correctly made according to

the directions laid down by the sages of the Massorah. We are therefore landed in this dilemma: Follow the direct evidence of the Hebrew copies, and the two disputed verses must be left out; but, on the other hand, leave them out, and the sacred text is made inconsistent with itself, for the number of the cities that are assigned cannot be made up.

Here then is a case where an amount of direct external evidence that is perfectly overwhelming is nevertheless in the English Bible set aside owing to other considerations. The argument, it will have been seen, is immensely strong against the claims of the two verses so long as we confine our attention to surviving manuscripts of the Hebrew original; but it is set aside on the authority of the Greek and other versions of the Old Testament, them-

selves older than any surviving manuscripts, and therefore admitted as conclusive witnesses that once upon a time the disputed verses were contained in the original text of Scripture.

APPENDIX I.

ON THE RIGHT USE OF THE FAMOUS NOTE IN THE COMPLUTENSIAN POLYGLOTT.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON seems to understand that the famous Note was inserted in the margin of the Complutensian Polyglott by the editors, as some sort of explanation of the irregularity which they were conscious of introducing into the Greek text, when they introduced the disputed verse.* It may, however, be questioned whether the Note was intended to have anything to do either with this Greek text or with the claims of the disputed verse. It seems rather intended as a justification of

* See Chapter I.

their version of the Latin text. The ordinary Latin text had not only a clause—"These Three are One" (*hi tres unum sunt*)—with the heavenly witnesses, but also a second clause—"These Three agree in One" (*hi tres unum sunt*)—with the earthly witnesses. This second clause the Complutensian editors thought not genuine, and accordingly omitted it. The Note is their defence of this step and is not, as Sir Isaac Newton, and Dr. Davidson after him, seem to have thought, any indication that they felt their Greek text in this part of the Epistle to need apology. The Note may be translated as follows :—

"St. Thomas, in his exposition of the second decretal upon the Supreme Trinity and the Catholic Faith, in treating the following passage against Abbot Joachim—viz., "There are Three who bear witness in heaven, Father, Word, and Holy Ghost," says as follows :

“And in order to teach the Unity of the Three Persons, there is subjoined, ‘And these Three are One’”—which indeed is said on account of their unity of essence. But Joachim, minded to take this perversely, tried to fasten its authority upon a unity of love and consent. For there is added in the same passage: “And there are three that bear witness on earth—Spirit, Water, and Blood.” And in some books there is added: “And these Three are One.” This, however, is not contained in the true copies; but it is said to have been added by the Arian heretics, in order to pervert the true understanding of the foregoing authority about the unity in essence of the Three Persons. Thus far St. Thomas in the place cited above.”

APPENDIX II.

DOES ST. CYPRIAN QUOTE THE DISPUTED VERSE ?

IN the front rank of the counter-difficulties noticed in Chapter V. is the alleged quotation of the disputed verse by St. Cyprian. The following account of this part of the subject is from the pen of an eminent dignitary of the Church, who is a well-known Biblical scholar, and has devoted much attention to this branch of the discussion. It is addressed exclusively, it will be observed, to the question, Does St. Cyprian quote the disputed text ?

The controversy respecting the authenticity of 1 John v. 7, took its rise, as is well known, in the omission of the verse in the

first and second editions of Erasmus' Greek Testament (1516 and 1519), on the ground of its absence from all the Greek MSS. which he had collated. Pressed on the other side by the alleged authority of Jerome, who, in the "Prologue" to the Catholic Epistles, which bore his name, had declared that, in inserting this verse in his edition, he was following the Greek original from which certain Latin interpreters had departed, Erasmus revived the attack of which that "Prologue" so bitterly complained, and spoke of Jerome's violence, unscrupulousness, and frequent inconsistency, as the probable origin of this supposed interpolation in the Sacred text.*

From this charge the memory of that much calumniated Father, to whose indefatigable labours the Christian Church stands so deeply

* Socinus greedily caught up the suggestion.

indebted, was vindicated by several writers, especially of our own country; appealing in his defence to the quotation of the latter part of the verse by the earlier Latin writers, St. Cyprian and Tertullian. The first to be mentioned of these writers is Dr. Hammond; who, in his note on this passage in his Paraphrase (published 1653), observes that, “as in St. Cyprian, who wrote before Arius was born, and consequently before the time in which there could be any motive to have made this insertion, the words are distinctly found” (Lib. de Unit. Eccles.) “Dicit Dominus, Ego et Pater unum sumus, Et iterum de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto *scriptum est, Et hi tres unum sunt,*” and in like manner Tertullian, (c. Prax.), “Qui tres unum sunt,”—so it is confessed of S. Hierome, that he asserted the truth of our reading from the Greek copies which he had, and defended it against all.

In the same year Selden, in his treatise “De Synedriis” (lib. c. ii. p. 137), after quoting the “Prologue,” says, “Ut ut se res ea habuerit, diu ante Hieronymum, reliquosque supra memoratos Patres Græcos Latinosq. citatur (*quod cum primis hic advertendum*) ut *indubitatae* lectionis *comma* illud Cypriano, qui floruit sub annum 250 (seu 140, aut circiter, ante Hieronymum) ‘Et iterum, inquit, de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto scriptum est, Et hi tres unum sunt.’ Quod lectionem ibi ejusmodi ut illi receptam planè designat.”

Still more fully Bishop Barlow (1653–1660) in a tract on the subject of this verse, gives his judgment of the importance of this testimony of Cyprian in its bearings on the general question.

“You know,” says the Bishop, “that the Socinians tell us that it was put in by the Anti-Arians; but this is a manifest calumny.

That it was in the text before Arius' time, appears by Cyprian (who flourished in the middle of the third century, about three-score years before Arius was taken notice of) ; for we find the *express words of this verse* in Cyprian's book, *De Unit. Eccles.* I take it then for an *evident truth*, that this seventh verse of the fifth chapter of the First of John was anciently a received part of the sacred text, even before Cyprian's time (for otherwise he would not have quoted it as such); and ergo, I make no doubt it was originally there and (*de jure*) should be so still. As for those copies that want it, whether Syriac, Greek, or Latin, printed or MS., I do (and shall do so still, till I see better reason to the contrary) conceive that they are defective, and want some of that integrity which the most ancient copies before Cyprian's time had ; for it is not irrational to believe that other copies agreed

with those that Cyprian made use of; and therefore *seeing that it was certainly in his*, I shall believe it was in the rest."

This important testimony to the authenticity of the verse being thus brought prominently forward, the great object of the Arian party was to get rid of it, on the ground of the corrupted state of the text of St. Cyprian's works. "In the year 1670, Sandius made," as Porson observes, "a formidable attack upon the verse," and with it upon Cyprian's testimony. He asserts broadly that the verse is not quoted by any of the Ante-nicene Fathers, with the sole exception of Cyprian, who seems to have cited it once in the "De Unitate Ecclesiæ." "But Possevinus," says Sandius, "having collated four MSS. with the printed copies, had found, in the course of four leaves only, 288 alterations, or additions, or omissions, or variations; almost more," as he

remarks, "than there are words in the whole treatise." Following Perkins and James, Rivetus, he tells us, says that this treatise has been corrupted by the insertion of many forged sentences, which disfigure the true meaning of the author. "How easily, therefore," he argues, "might this passage also have been inserted by those who did not shrink from corrupting the Sacred writings through fear of heretics.*

In answer to this, Dr. Sylvester Grabe, the father of the well-known Dr. John Ernest Grabe, printed at Koenigsburg, between the years 1675 and 1677, three "Programmata" in defence of the canonical authority of this verse. He shows that the manifold corruptions of which Dr. James, Perkins, and Rivetus had complained, were in passages which referred to the primacy of St. Peter, and bore

* "Interpret. Paradoxæ," p. 380-1.

on the supremacy of the See of Rome ; and that the variations which Possevinus had discovered “ only strengthened the argument in proof of the genuineness of this passage, inasmuch as it was read without variation in all.”

But the proof of the genuineness of this passage in St. Cyprian was put beyond all doubt by Bishop Fell’s edition, published in 1682. In that edition, in a note upon the passage in question, the Bishop points out the reference to the verse in St. John, as affording ample proof of the falsehood of the charge brought against St. Jerome. He remarks at the same time that, whether by neglect or design he would not venture to decide; Jerome’s prologue had disappeared from the editions of the Vulgate which had lately appeared ; for which reason he would give it a place in his note on that passage.

Bishop Bull, also, in his “*Defensio Fidei Nicenæ*” (published by Bishop Fell in 1685), treating of St. Cyprian, and defending him from the misrepresentations of Sandius, having cited the passage from the Epistle “*Ad Ju-baianum*,” took occasion to point out the reference to the verse in St. John; observing at the same time that in the treatise “*De Unitate Ecclesiæ*” the verse is avowedly cited. He refers also to the passage in Tertullian as a “manifest allusion” to the same verse: recommending it as supplying an answer to those who suspected that these words were inserted in the text by the Catholics after the Arian controversy.

The reference to Cyprian in Bishop Fell’s edition marks a new era in the history of the controversy. Simon, in his “*Histoire Critique*” (published in 1689), after vindicating, against Bishop Fell’s remarks, the omission of

Jerome's "Prologue" in recent editions of the "Vulgate," and arguing against its genuineness, maintains that the earliest writer who appears to have cited the passage is Victor Vitensis, who lived a century after Jerome, and who, in the second book of his history of the Vandal persecution, thus refers to it: "Et ut adhuc luce clarius unius Divinitatis esse cum Patre et Filio Spiritum Sanctum doceamus, Joannis Evangelistæ testimonio comprobatur. Ait namque, Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in cœlo, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus: et hi tres unum sunt." Fulgentius, he remarks, was the next to quote it about the same time. Simon then proceeds to the citation in St. Cyprian, which had been brought forward by Bishop Fell, and by father Amelote of the Oratoire. He argues in the first place that, if St. Cyprian had read the verse in his copy of the New Testament, it

was incredible that St. Augustine should not have employed it against the Arians in his time. He then endeavours to show that St. Cyprian does but apply to the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity the words which we read in the eighth verse concerning the testimony of “the spirit and the water and the blood.” In proof of this he refers to “the learned Facundus,” who was, he says, of the same church of Africa, and who explains the words at length, proving by them, after St. Cyprian’s example, the mystery of the Trinity. His whole discourse, Simon remarks, presupposes that he read only the words, “*Tres sunt qui testificantur in terrâ, spiritus, aqua, et sanguis,*” which, however, he explained, mystically, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. “*De Patre, Filio, et Spiritu Sancto dicit, Tres sunt qui testimonium dant in terra, &c. &c. . . . et hi tres unum sunt ; in*

spiritu significans Patrem, in aqua, Spiritum Sanctum; in sanguine vero Filium significans." And, in support of this interpretation, Facundus appealed to St. Cyprian as having given the same sense to the passage in St. John: "Quod Joannis Apostoli testimonium B. Cyprianus Carthaginensis antistes et martyr, in Epistolâ sive Libro quem de Trinitate scripsit, de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto dictum intelligit." Had the Bishop of Oxford, Simon goes on to say, compared these words of Facundus with those of St. Cyprian, he would not have brought against Erasmus and Socinus such feeble proofs in defence of St. Jerome; who had no need of defenders, inasmuch as he was not the author of the "Prologue to the Canonical Epistles," nor of the interpolation which had been made in the Epistle of St. John. Of Victor, whom Simon had already mentioned as the first who ap-

peared to have quoted the passage, he remarks that, by his less guarded quotation, he conveyed the idea that the record of the Three in Heaven actually existed in St. John; whereas St. Cyprian and Facundus had only referred to it as an explanation of the witness of the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood.

But why is no reference made to the passage in Fulgentius, whose name had been mentioned together with that of Victor, as having quoted the verse about the same time? The passage itself will perhaps explain the omission. The words of Fulgentius are these: "In Patre ergo et Filio et Spiritu Sancto unitatem substantiæ accipimus, personas confundere non audemus. Beatus enim Joannes apostolus testatur, dicens, Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent *in cælo*, *Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus*; *et tres unum sunt*. Quod *etiam* beatissimus martyr Cyprianus in epistolâ 'De

Unitate Ecclesiæ' *confitetur*, dicens, ' Qui pacem Christi, etc. . . . Atque ut unam ecclesiam unius Dei esse monstraret, hæc confestim *testimonia de Scripturis* inseruit : Dicit Dominus, Ego et Pater unum sumus ; et iterum de Patre, Filio, et Spiritu Sancto scriptum est : ' et hi tres unum sunt.' Non ergo ex tribus partibus unum colimus Deum, sed, apostolicæ fidei regulam retinentes, perfectum consempternum Filium, de perfecto et sempiterno Patre sine initio genitum, et potestate non imparem, et naturâ fatemur æqualem ; Sanctum quoque Spiritum non aliud fatemur esse quam Deum ; nec à Filio, nec à Patre diversum, nec in Filio nec in Patre confusum."* This passage seems to prove very clearly two points : first, that Fulgentius had the disputed verse in his copy, and secondly, that he considered the

* Fulgent. c. Arian. Max. Bibl. Patr. t. ix. p. 41. Ed. Lugd. 1677.

passage in St. Cyprian as a direct quotation. He says, "Hæc confestim testimonia de Scripturis inseruit." On the other side is urged the passage of Facundus, which seems to imply that in his copy the verse was wanting, and that he understood St. Cyprian to have been merely interpreting, not quoting it. If the former supposition, indeed, be correct, the latter would follow, of course; for he had no other way of explaining the passage in St. Cyprian; and what he says is of the less value in forming our judgment of the passage as it stands in St. Cyprian. But if the question be between the *positive* evidence of Fulgentius and the *negative* evidence of Facundus, we can scarcely doubt which to prefer. Independently, however, of this consideration, there cannot be a doubt, putting the testimonies side by side, which ought to preponderate. For, in the first

place, Fulgentius lived some thirty or forty years earlier than Facundus. In the next place, he was of Carthaginian origin. Thirdly, he spent his whole life in Africa and the West; while Facundus, though bishop of an African See, resided chiefly at Constantinople, administering the affairs of the African Church at the Court of the Emperor. Still further, Fulgentius quotes the text in immediate controversy with the Arians, at whose hands he suffered persecution. He was, moreover, a man of singular learning, both in Latin and Greek. It may perhaps be worth remarking that his reference to St. Cyprian is more definite and precise than that of Facundus; the one quoting St. Cyprian's actual words, the other only referring generally to his argument. The very mode of speaking of St. Cyprian as "*beatissimus martyr Cyprianus*," compared with that of Facundus, "*beatissi-*

mus Cyprianus Carthaginiensis antistes et martyr,"—not to mention the inaccuracy of Facundus in referring to the "de Unitate Ecclesiæ" as "Epistola sive Liber quem de *Trinitate* scripsit;" and indeed the very expression, "quem de Trinitate scripsit," compared with Fulgentius' "Epistolâ de Unitate Ecclesiæ," gives to his testimony the greater weight which is due to one who, it would seem, was so familiar with the name and writings of St. Cyprian. These manifold proofs of vagueness and inaccuracy have even given occasion to the idea that Facundus had probably never seen the treatise of Cyprian to which he thus refers. "He seems," said Travis, "to have been utterly at a loss how to describe or class it; for he calls it an Epistle *or* a book. And he has indubitably given to it a title which is not its own. . . . Either of these circumstances singly taken raises a suspicion. Com-

bined, they amount nearly to proof, that Facundus had not read the book which he thus ventured to quote." May not his mistake about the title of the Epistle have arisen from its having been referred to as the "Epistola De *Unitate*?" And, having been quoted especially in reference to the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, it might be supposed, by those who were not acquainted with it, to have this doctrine for its subject. Still, further, it should be borne in mind, if we would give its due weight to the testimony of Fulgentius, that, twenty years before his time, the exact words which he quotes were as distinctly quoted, against the Arians, in a formal Confession of Faith, presented by upwards of 460 African bishops, assembled under Eugenius, bishop of Carthage. It is this Confession which Simon has spoken of as though it were a carelessly

worded reference to the passage in St. John, or to Cyprian's exposition of it, occurring in one of Victor's writings.*

It was in the year 484, between fifty and sixty years before the date of Facundus, that "Hunmeric, king of the Vandals, a fierce persecutor of the Catholics, and a strenuous favourer of the Arians, commanded all the Catholic bishops within his dominions to meet and *confirm their doctrine by Holy Scripture*. Accordingly, they assembled to the number of more than 460, with Eugenius, Bishop of Carthage, at their head. The bishops drew up and presented to their sovereign a Confession of Faith, which is recorded by Victor Vitensis;" and it is in this Confession that the passage occurs which has already been given from Simon: "Et ut adhuc luce clarius unius Divinitatis esse cum Patre et

* Victor is simply the historian who records it.

Filio Spiritum Sanctum doceamus, Joannis Evangelistæ testimonio comprobatur. Ait namque, Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in cœlo, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus ; et hi tres unum sunt.” When we find these words agreeing exactly (with the single exception of the insertion of the “hi”*) with the citation of Fulgentius, we can scarcely doubt what was the received reading in the church of Carthage, in the latter part of the fifth century ; not much more than half a century (instead of a century, as Simon represents) after the death of Jerome. Fa-cundus, on the other hand, makes use of a different rendering : “ Tres sunt qui testimo-nium dant in terrâ ;” and how many versions were current in the Latin Church—especially, it would seem, in the African branch of it—

* And this is the reading of “Codd. Voss.” 3, Lambeth, and Ebor.

we have the testimony both of Jerome and of Augustine. Even in the version, however, which Facundus makes use of, the words, “in terrâ,” which we read, seem to be vestiges of the seventh verse, and the “in cœlo” to which they correspond. The exact correspondence between the citation in Fulgentius and the Confession of Faith of the African bishops is the more remarkable in that, in another place where Fulgentius is quoting from St. John, with a less solemn appeal to his testimony, he gives the words: “qui testimonium *dicunt*,” instead of “*perhibent*.” The passage occurs in his treatise “De Trin.” c. iii. He is quoting the two texts which St. Cyprian combines: “Ego et Pater unum sumus Similiter et illud: ‘Tres sunt,’ inquit, ‘qui testimonium dant in cœlo, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus,’ et hi tres unum sunt.” In the other passage he had referred to the testi-

mony of St. John in a way which would lead us to expect the strictest accuracy of quotation: "Beatus Joannes Apostolus *testatur* *dicens*, 'Tres sunt,' etc."

With regard to the question which Simon raised and which, according to Porson's statement, has continued "ever since his time, whether Cyprian quotes our present seventh verse, or only applies the eighth by a mystical interpretation to the Trinity," the question ought, one would think, to have been set at rest by the arguments with which Mill, in his "long-expected edition of the New Testament" (published in 1707),* brought the result of thirty years' unwearied reading and thought to the defence of the position in which the controversy had been left by Bishop Fell,

* "At last," says Porson, "Mill's long-expected edition of the New Testament was published."

under whose auspices Dr. Mill had begun and, for more than ten years, prosecuted his task. Upon the two passages in St. Cyprian, Dr. Mill observes : (1) that the words of St. John could not have been more distinctly and explicitly quoted ; (2) that the testimony of Fulgentius is clear that the passage in the “ De Unitate ” of St. Cyprian was a reference to this text ; (3) that the argument drawn from Facundus was of no weight in the matter. In support of this position he asks how Facundus, living 300 years later than Cyprian, should know Cyprian’s mind better than Fulgentius, who lived somewhat nearer to his time. Still further, he asks, how it could be established that, in the age of St. Cyprian, any one adopted that mystical sense of the eighth verse. For, he observes, as that explanation does not occur anywhere among the Greeks, who did not read the seventh verse, so no one

of the Latins, he believes, for more than 100 years after St. Cyprian mentions this interpretation. It seems, as he goes on to say, to have been first introduced by St. Augustine ("Contra Maxim.," iii. c. 22); and, according to the testimony of St. Eucherius, it was adopted by many. For not reading the seventh verse in their MSS., and at the same time learning from Tertullian, Cyprian, and others, perhaps, whose writings have perished, that the words "hi tres unum sunt" were said in Holy Scripture of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, they immediately concluded that it was this eighth verse to which those Fathers referred (the words not occurring elsewhere); and therefore that by the water, the spirit, and the blood, were mystically signified the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. What wonder, then, if Facundus, having in his hands a copy wanting this verse, unhesitatingly affirmed

(according to the opinion of others, doubtless, as well as his own) that the testimony of St. John in the eighth verse of this chapter was said by St. Cyprian to refer to the three Divine Persons. Dr. Mill then goes on to express the judgment which he had formed, after a careful consideration of the matter—viz., that the allegorical interpretation in question was so uncertain and precarious—the writers who employ it not being even agreed among themselves; some by “the water” understanding the Father, and by “the spirit,” the Holy Ghost, others, on the contrary, by “the spirit,” the Father, and by “the water,” the Holy Ghost—and not only that, but withal so futile and trifling, so strained, and unnatural; such indeed as, except it had arisen out of circumstances such as those supposed in this case, we should scarcely have found in Augustine or any the Latins—that it does not seem in any way

to be attributable to St. Cyprian. On the contrary, when one finds a writer of remarkably chaste imagination, who is very little given to indulge in lax and mystical interpretations, and who in his citations scrupulously adheres to the letter of Scripture, so expressly saying, that of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, it is written "*hi tres unum sunt*," one cannot but come to the conclusion that he referred to the seventh verse. Dr. Mill then proceeds to give his explanation of the case. He observes that, as the African church, the offspring of the Roman, had received from the earliest days of Christianity the sacred books of the Italic version, that is, at least, the Gospels and St. Paul's Epistles, so it is most certain that the Catholic Epistles also, of which the copies were more scarce, inasmuch as they were for the most part of less authority in the Church than those which had been written to particu-

lar churches, had come into the hands of the teachers of that Church. These copies, shortly after the planting of the faith in Africa, were used by Tertullian and Cyprian; and out of the Greek MSS. which they had in their hands they supplied the verse in St. John which (according to Dr. Mill's suspicion) was from the beginning wanting in the Latin copies. His judgment, in conclusion, as to the value of the quotations of the verse by these writers shall be given in his own words: "Ego equidem de tota hâc re ita censeo: Sufficere abunde in *αὐθεντίας* commatis, quod à Tertulliano et Cypriano citetur, licet nullo modo, ne per conjecturam, assequi possemus, unde factum ut apud Joannem legerint ipsi quod nemo quisquam Græcorum viderit; imo licet in nullis omnino ab illo tempore in hunc usque diem exemplaribus comparuerit." This passage may serve to throw some light upon the

mystery which so much perplexed Mr. Porson, how “ Mill, after fairly summing up the evidence on both sides, just as we should expect him to declare the verse spurious, is unaccountably,” he says, “ transformed into a defender.”

While Mill was engaged in this work, Dr. Grabe was publishing his edition of the “ *Defensio*,” and other Latin works of Bishop Bull, which came out with Grabe’s annotations in 1703. In his note on the passage in which Bull had referred to the testimony of St. Cyprian, Grabe meets the objection drawn from Facundus by the counter-evidence of Fulgentius, whom he describes as a writer somewhat earlier, and not less learned ; noticing at the same time his greater accuracy in the reference to Cyprian, and arguing that Cyprian, in the opinion of Fulgentius, certainly referred to the seventh verse, and that Ful-

gentius most clearly proved that he read that verse in the African copies. He then goes on to argue from internal evidence in behalf of the authenticity of the verse ; answering the objection arising from the state of the MSS., and the absence of the verse from so great a number of them.

While thus the authenticity of the verse was defended in this country, abroad Simon found antagonists in Ittigius, Martianay, Maius, and Kettner ; but into the controversy, as carried on there, it is unnecessary for us to enter.

In 1715 the controversy was revived in England by the publication of "A Full Inquiry into the Original Authority of that Text, 1 John v. 7 ; containing an account of Dr. Mill's Evidences from antiquity for and against its being genuine. With an Examination of his judgment thereupon. Humbly

addressed to both Houses of Convocation.”* The writer, Emlyn, was a Presbyterian minister of Dublin, and was engaged in the controversy, it appears, by Clarke and Whiston, who did not themselves choose to appear openly. Emlyn wrote anonymously at first, but in 1719 published his name.

In his account of “the evidence offered in support of the text” (Chapter II.), he mentions

* Whiston tells us that Dr. Clarke had “recommended” him “to write against the genuineness of that famous text in the 1st Ep. of St. John which,” he says, “he knew I believed to be an interpolation. But as we both knew that Sir I. Newton had written such a Dissertation already, and I was then engaged in other pursuits, I excused myself at that time; and we both agreed to recommend that matter to Mr. Emlyn, which work he undertook and performed with great impartiality and accuracy.” (“Memoirs of Dr. Clarke,” p. 77.) In the first edition of his “Scripture Doctrine” (publ. 1712), Dr. Clarke had quoted the verse among his testimonies, adding—“though it ought not to be concealed that this passage, though it does not certainly appear to have been found in the text of any Greek MS., should not have too much stress laid

the Latin Fathers whom Mill had produced, “and which are indeed,” he says, “his main strength and confidence.” From Cyprian, “on whose authority,” he says, “the cause has chiefly rested hitherto” (“Full Inquiry,” p. 164), he quotes the words, “It is written of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, These three are one, &c.” . . . And near 300 years “after,”

upon it in any controversy” (p. 238). In his 2nd ed. (publ. 1719), he inserts the words, “nor was cited by any of the numerous writers in the whole Arian controversy;” observing in a note, that “it is not quoted by any of the Latins before S. Jerome the passage out of Cyprian being only a mystical interpretation of the 8th verse, as is more than probable, as well from the express testimonies of Eucherius and Facundus, referred to by Dr. Mill, as from the texts being wanting in all, even the Latin copies, both before and after St. Cyprian’s time.” He refers to his “Commentary on Forty Select Texts in answer to Mr. Nelson,” p. 206; his “Letter to Dr. Wells,” p. 43; Dr. Mill’s Dissertation upon the place, compared with Proleg. p. 117, and “an anonymous book entitled, ‘A Full Inquiry into that Text, 1 John v. 7; wherein this whole matter is learnedly and fully discussed’ ” (pp. 206-7).

he says, "comes Fulgentius, a bishop of Africa, and says that Cyprian in the former words had respect to St. John's testimony" (p. 129). Upon this statement we may remark the omission of the former part of Cyprian's sentence, which contributes so essentially to the proof that he is directly quoting Scripture: "*Dicit Dominus, Ego et Pater unum sumus. Et iterum scriptum est, et tres unum sunt.*" Fulgentius, moreover, flourished not much more than 250 years after St. Cyprian, not "near 300."

In his proof of "the insufficiency of the arguments brought in support of the text" (Chapter III.), Emlyn repeats Simon's argument of the "mystical interpretation," and his reference to Facundus; and then asks, in answer to Mill, why St. Cyprian might not begin this mystical interpretation as well as St. Augustine. He endeavours to set aside

the argument from Fulgentius by the assertion that, "Facundus is as good an evidence as he, and more particular;" and further that, "even this does not contradict Facundus. For Fulgentius and he both say the same thing, viz., that Cyprian confessed St. John's testimony . . . only Facundus tells us that he took this testimony from the eighth verse, which he so interpreted, and Fulgentius does not say it was otherwise; and therefore there is no reason to oppose him to Facundus. . . ."

In further proof of this position, he argues: (1) That "Fulgentius speaks of it as a remarkable *concession* in St. Cyprian: 'Quod etiam Beatus Cyprianus *confitetur*.' "Confesses what?" he asks. "Not that St. John had those words" (in the seventh verse), but the mystical interpretation of the eighth. This indeed, he says, "was somewhat far-fetched, and not so clear a point, but St. Cyprian's

confessing it might give it some credit ; but it could give none to an undoubted text of St. John to say Cyprian acknowledged it to be true." (2) He tells us, "Cyprian's words are not the exact words pretended to be found in St. John ; for Cyprian says, ' Father, Son (not the Word), and Spirit.' . . . And therefore, if our printed text be right, Cyprian had no *such* copy, or else he did not keep *strictly* to it; and if he did not cite the words *exactly*, only the *sense* of them as an interpreter ; then, in such a loose way of speaking, it might well be, as Facundus says it was—viz., his sense of the eighth verse. . . . Besides, Cyprian does not say that the words Father, Son, and Spirit were written ; all that Cyprian says was written is, ' Hi tres unum sunt ;' that this was said of Father, Son, and Spirit, is only Cyprian's interpretation. Let the interpretation be never so forced, that is nothing : so

it was ; and there are enough as strange interpretations of texts in the Fathers, and in St. Cyprian himself . . . (see Dr. Whitby's 'Dissertation'). Nor was it unusual with Cyprian to cite Scripture more by *his sense* of it than by the strict *letter of the text*. Thus, instead of 'Lead us not into temptation,' he cites it, 'Suffer us not to be led,' &c. Again, he cites Revelation xix. 10, 'Worship thou the Lord Jesus,' instead of 'Worship thou God.' Will any say upon this that he found a particular copy which had *these* readings ? No, surely ; but rather that it was Cyprian's exposition of the true reading in *all* the copies. Even so," says Emlyn, "I doubt not, his words, 'the Father,' &c., was *his* sense of the 8th verse of St. John's fifth chapter." "I shall conclude this," he adds, "with Mr. Du Pin's judgment upon the case: 'Tis not, then,' says he, 'absolutely certain that Cyprian hath quoted

the seventh verse,' and Father Simon's, who says, ' 'tis out of doubt that he hath not.' Though 'tis probable this mistake of Cyprian's words led some following African writers into the opinion that St. John had said them expressly."

The argument as to the "mystical interpretation," and that drawn from the reference in Facundus had already been met by Mill. The question why St. Cyprian might not begin this mystical interpretation, as well as St. Augustine, Mill had already answered, by suggesting that it was this very passage of St. Cyprian which gave rise to that interpretation. He had also shown that Facundus is *not* as good an evidence as Fulgentius: and that he is "more particular" is simply untrue. As to Fulgentius not opposing Facundus, let us see how the argument stands. Fulgentius, it would seem, wished to recommend a mysti-

cal interpretation of the eighth verse, which was somewhat far-fetched ; but St. Cyprian's confessing it might give it some credit. He, therefore, observes that St. Cyprian *confesses* the mystical interpretation of the eighth verse. On this hypothesis we should have expected to find in Fulgentius what we find in Facundus ; the eighth verse quoted and explained mystically, and then this interpretation supported by St. Cyprian's authority in some such way as Facundus appeals to it : " Quod Joannis Apostoli testimonium Beatus Cyprianus de Patre, Filio, et Spiritu Sancto intelligit." But, instead of this, we find Fulgentius distinctly quoting the seventh verse, and adding — " quod etiam beatissimus Martyr Cyprianus confitetur, dicens," etc. Confesses what ? we may well ask in our turn :—the truth (so we are to believe) of a certain mystical interpretation which he has not given or alluded to,

of a verse which he has not quoted ! Besides, what need had he of this far-fetched interpretation, which was to be supported by the aid of a “confession” of St. Cyprian ? He had, or supposed he had, the express words of St. John, which he had just quoted, and which more fully answered his end. St. Cyprian’s confession, of which Fulgentius speaks, was clearly neither “that St. John had those words” in the seventh verse, nor that the supposed mystical interpretation of the eighth verse was true. His “confession” was of the great doctrine which Fulgentius was employed in defending. The argument stands thus : “In the Father, therefore, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, we acknowledge (*accipimus*) a unity of substance ; we dare not confound the persons. For the blessed John the Apostle testifieth, ‘There are *three* that bear witness, &c., and these *three* are *one*. Which *also* (quod

etiam) the most blessed Martyr Cyprian in his Epistle of the Unity of the Church confesseth (*confitetur*) saying, ‘Whoso breaketh the peace of Christ, and concord, acteth against Christ : whoso gathereth elsewhere beside the Church, scattereth.’ And that he might show that the Church of the ONE God is *one* (*ut unam ecclesiam unius Dei esse monstraret*), he immediately inserted these testimonies from the Scriptures : ‘The Lord said, I and the Father are *One*.’ And again of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost it is written, ‘And these *three* are *One*.’ We, therefore, do not worship *one* God [consisting] of a threefold division ; but, retaining the rule of apostolic faith, we confess (*fatemur*) that the perfect co-eternal Son is begotten, without beginning, of the perfect and eternal Father, and we also confess (*fatemur*) that the Holy Spirit is none other than God, neither different from

the Father and the Son, nor confounded in the Son or in the Father." This it was—this doctrine—which was the subject of Cyprian's *Confession*.

As to Emlyn's second argument, that Cyprian does not quote the text in St. John exactly, it may be remarked that he *does* quote exactly all that he professes to quote. He does not say, "Tres sunt," &c., writing "Filius" instead of "Verbum." He quotes only the words, "Et tres unum sunt," saying of them in his own words : "de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto scriptum est." Reasons, in fact, have been assigned why he should so cite them ; but it is enough for our present purpose to remark, that he does keep strictly in his quotation to the words of the Apostle as we now read them. But even if he had not, it were absurd to argue that *therefore* he cited only the sense of them as an interpreter ; and

that then, in such a loose way of speaking, it might well be, as Facundus says it was, his sense of the *eighth* verse that he was giving. Such an argument requires some evidence, or at least some probability to be brought forward in proof of the several distinct degrees of license which are involved in such an interpretation as that which is thus attributed to St. Cyprian.

But, next, St. Cyprian is charged generally with being equally careless in the quotation, and lax in the interpretation of Scripture. Both these assertions Mill had expressly contradicted. With regard to the latter point, we are referred to Dr. Whitby for proof, that “there are enough as strange interpretations of texts in the Fathers and in St. Cyprian himself.” But no instances are cited; and in Whitby very few passages at all will be found quoted from St. Cyprian; certainly

none in any way parallel to the case in hand. With regard to Cyprian's supposed manner of citing his own expositions of Scripture, instead of the strict letter of the text, Dr. Grabe had already endeavoured to show, in reference to this very question (in his notes on the passage in Bull), that St. Cyprian probably had a copy before him, in which he found his peculiar readings. Dr. Grabe had even defended these readings, as supplying what, in his opinion, was probably the genuine text of Scripture.

Emlyn's "Full Inquiry" involved him immediately in close controversy with David Martin, pastor of the French congregation at Utrecht. Martin published, in 1717, "A Critical Dissertation on 1 John v. 7, wherein the authentickness of this text is fully proved, against the objections of M. Simon and the modern Arians." (This was translated into

English in 1719.) It called forth, in 1718, an immediate "Answer" from Emlyn; and "An Examination" of Emlyn's "Answer" by Martin, republished also in English, in 1719. To this Emlyn made a "Reply," in 1720; and, finally, Martin published, in 1721 (republished in English in the following year), "The Genuineness of 1 John v. 7, demonstrated." Of the result of this controversy, Porson observes, that "Emlyn, it must be owned, left Martin in possession of the field;" though, as Bishop Burgess remarks, he "survived Martin's last tract two-and-twenty years" ("Vindic." p. 2); "and yet, I know not how," says Porson, the "opinion of Emlyn made many converts. And Bishop Smallbrooke seems not to have been satisfied with Martin's defence; for he says that little has been said against Mr. Emlyn, except what has been offered by the ingenious M. Martin."

It is strange that Porson should have given such a representation of Bishop Smallbrooke's opinion. What the Bishop says is in a letter to Dr. Bentley, printed in 1722, entitled "An Enquiry into the Authority of the Primitive Complutensian Edition of the New Testament, as principally founded on the most Ancient Vatican MS., together with some Research after that MS., in order to decide the dispute about 1 John v. 7." Upon the general controversy it was no part of the Bishop's plan to enter, observing that "These matters have been so expatiated upon by our late writers, who on one side have copied chiefly after M. Simon, that, instead of repeating what is so well known," he rather chooses, he says, "to lay before the public another part of this argument, that had not been so thoroughly discussed as it deserved." He shows, however, sufficiently in passing, his judgment of

the general question, and his satisfaction with the argument which Martin had conducted. He only wondered, considering the importance of the controversy, that others had not come forward in the same cause. "Certainly, it is high time," he says, "that this celebrated passage should be examined with the greatest accuracy; that either its authority may be satisfactorily vindicated, or be fairly given up for an interpolation, if it is not capable of being defended. The Church has been of late so rudely insulted for retaining it in the English translation of St. John's First Epistle; and the memory of your ancient friend, the late faithful and learned reviser [Dr. Mill] of the New Testament, has been reflected on so severely for deciding in favour of it, that it may seem surprising to some that little more has on that occasion been wrote in vindication of it, than what has been offered

by the ingenious Mr. Martin, in his controversy with Mr. Emlyn." "It ought to be added," Bp. Smallbrooke remarks in a note, "that a copious vindication of this text has been very lately published in Four Sermons, by Dr. E. Calamy."

"It is not indeed easy," the Bishop proceeds, "to add anything considerable to what has already been laid before the public about the quotation of this passage by *St. Cyprian*, or the supposed allusion to it by Tertullian, *together with the methods that have been made use of to elude those authorities*; and therefore I shall not here enter into an inquiry whether *St. Cyprian* directly quoted this passage, as *Fulgentius* seems to affirm, or whether he mentioned it only as a mystical interpretation of the eighth verse, as *Facundus* tells us; though *Facundus* lived too remotely from the age of *St. Cyprian* to know with certainty

that what St. Cyprian *seems to quote literally* out of Scripture, was designed by him merely for a mystical interpretation of another passage." Certainly, however "many converts" the opinion of Emlyn may have made, Bishop Smallbrooke was not one of them : and Martin, in the Preface to his "Examination of Emlyn's Answer" (Lond. 1719), tells us that, if he may be allowed to say it, his adversary had seen the approbation of the public was on his side. Above all, Emlyn had failed in what, as Martin remarks in the same Preface, was the main object of his publication. "The anonymous English tract upon this subject," he says, "which came abroad under the title of 'A Full Enquiry,' &c., was particularly designed to render its authentickness suspected ; and to stir up the bishops and clergy of England to decree in Convocation that for the future these words of the seventh verse should

be no longer inserted into the editions of the Epistle. The wisdom and piety of the bishops and clergy were not moved with his loud exclamations; and the Convocation prudently dropped the affair. The discourse proved unsuccessful.

“ *Telumque imbelli sine ictu*
Conjecit——”

Meanwhile, though the chief controversy lay between Emlyn and Martin, the publication of Dr. Clarke's “Scripture Doctrine” (1712) led to some discussion of the verse in question in our own Church. The “Scripture Doctrine” received a reply (in 1713). “The Scripture Doctrine of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity, Vindicated from the Misrepresentations of Dr. Clarke, to which is prefixed a Letter to the Rev. Dr. by Robert Nelson, Esq.,” who was the editor of the volume, the author being Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Knight, not then

in holy orders. In answer to Dr. Clarke's remark, that it ought not to be concealed that this passage does not certainly appear to have been found in the text of any Greek MS., he observes, "It ought also to be told, that it appears to have been found in the old Latin version that was used in the African church. Else how could *St. Cyprian* have cited it in his Treatise "de Unitate Ecclesiæ," and again in the "Epistola ad Jubaianum" (pp. 137-8).

Dr. Clarke replied that Dr. Mill had shown that the old Latin version had it not. Knight, in his "Defence of the True Scripture Doctrine" (published 1715), admits that such was Dr. Mill's opinion; but observes that the same Dr. Mill, who thinks that the Italic version had it not from the beginning, is yet of opinion that Tertullian and Cyprian corrected their copies by Greek originals, and that some few transcripts of those corrected

copies were publicly used in that very age in some of their churches. And in his Prologue he tells us from St. Austin, that the African church had several Latin versions besides the Italic from the very beginning ; whereof some were made from complete originals, and had the testimony of the three Divine Persons” (p. 296).

A volume entitled “The true Scripture Doctrine of the Holy and Ever-blessed Trinity stated and defended, in opposition to the Arian, by Abraham Taylor,” which was published in 1727 and dedicated to Waterland, gives a good summary of the state of the question, at the conclusion of a controversy which, as he observes, had “run out into a great length.” As opponents of the verse he mentions Simon, Le Clerc, Dr. Clarke, and Emlyn ; on the other side, Dr. Smith, in his “Discussion against Simon ;” Dr. Grabe, in his

“Notes on Bishop Bull ;” Dr. Mill, M. Van Maestricht, M. Ketner, M. Rogier, Dr. Jenkyn, M. Martin, Dr. Calamy, Dr. Knight, Mr. May, Bishop Smallbrooke, and Mr. Wade.

With regard to the passages from St. Cyprian, the author observes, in reply to the supposed mystical interpretation, and the argument from Facundus, that “the sense of Cyprian is best to be understood from his own words, which are as plain and easy as can be desired ;” that “there is no shadow of his following that mystical interpretation which some afterwards run into,” probably, “not having the seventh verse in their copies, and yet finding the words ‘these three are one,’ sometimes quoted concerning the Three Divine Persons. Facundus,” he says, “was one of these . . . but he might mistake Cyprian’s sense, as well as blunder, as he does in the title of the book he quotes: and no reason

can be given why he should better understand Cyprian than Fulgentius, who has assured us that he quoted the seventh verse. . . . What else our adversaries object to Cyprian's testimony is," he says, "so exceedingly weak that mere pity may prevent a person's exposing it."

Bishop Smallbrooke's letter to Bentley was occasioned by the publication (in 1720) of Bentley's "Proposals" for a new edition of the Greek Testament. His main object was to restore the Vulgate to the state in which it was left by Jerome, and to apply it as the criterion of the true state of the Greek text. Wetstein, still earlier, and Hare, had pressed him to undertake such an edition; and in 1716 he addressed a letter to Archbishop Wake (dated April 6), stating his design and begging his support. "It was plain to me," he says in his letter to the Archbishop, "that when that copy came from that great Father's hands,

it must agree exactly with the most authentic Greek exemplars; and if now it could be retrieved, it would be the best test and voucher for the true reading, out of several pretending ones." In his letter to Wetstein, he expresses himself with the same deference to the most ancient copies of the Latin Version: "*Hujusmodi Latinos veterrimos vel Græcis ipsis prætulerim.*"

In the December of this year (1716) Dr. Bentley "received a long letter from a layman, whose name has not been preserved, written in consequence of a report that the verse would be omitted in his promised edition. This correspondent argues earnestly for its genuineness, upon the evidence of the context of the whole passage, the sense of which he contends would be incomplete without it.* To this letter Bentley replied in a letter dated

* Monk's "Life of Bentley," vol. ii. pp. 16, 17.

January 1, 17 $\frac{16}{17}$, explaining the nature of his proposed edition. "About a year ago," he says, "reflecting upon some passages of St. Hierome, that he had adjusted and castigated the then Latin Vulgate to the best Greek exemplars, and had kept the very order of the words of the original, I formed a thought *à priori* that, if St. Jerome's Latin exemplar could now be come at, it would be found to agree exactly with the Greek text of the same age; and so the old copies of each language would give mutual proof, and even demonstration, to each other. Whereupon, rejecting the printed editions of each, and the several manuscripts of seven centuries and under, I make use of none but those of a thousand years ago, or above; of which sort I have twenty now in my study, that one with another make 20,000 years.* I had the pleasure to

* Upon which passage "Crito Cantabrigiensis" himself,

find that they agreed exactly like two tallies or two indentures; and I am able from thence to lead men out of the labyrinth of 60,000 various lections (for St. Jerome's Latin has as many varieties as the Greek) and to give the text as it stood in the best copies in the time of the Council of Nice, without the error of fifty words." "Now in this work I indulge nothing to any conjecture, not even in a letter, but proceed solely upon authority of copies and Fathers of that age. And what will be the event about that said verse of St. John, I myself know not yet; having not used all the old copies that I have information of. But by this you see, that in my proposed

in his "Vindication" of Porson, makes this note, "MSS. that one with another make 20,000 years! As genuine nonsense as ever appeared in print. Surely *our Master* must have under-rated his correspondent's intellect. I am glad that he did not use this language when addressing his Grace of Canterbury" (p. 226).

work, the fate of that verse will be a mere question of fact. You endeavour to prove (and that's all you aspire to) that it may have been writ by the Apostle, being consonant to his other doctrine. This I may concede to you; and if the fourth century know that text, let it come in, in God's name: but if that age did not know it, then Arianism in its height was beat down without the help of that verse; and, let the fact prove as it will, the doctrine is unshaken.

“This correspondent rejoined with a further expostulation, and afterwards published the three letters with some additional remarks of his own, which proved nothing but his disqualification to discuss such a subject.” Such is the account of the correspondence given by Bentley's biographer; it does not, however, do justice to the letters of the layman. He does not confine himself to the internal evi-

dence. He argues from the existence of the reading “in St. Cyprian’s time.” “Cyprian’s version,” he says, “is express, and cannot be imagined to be a version of the eighth verse ; if that had been intended by him, a literal version of *πνεῦμα*, *ὑδωρ*, and *αἷμα* would as well have answered his argument for the Unity of the Church ; and his supposed allegorical interpretation will prove nothing for him, till he had first explained and proved his explanation, which he has never done.” In his second letter, dated January 3, 1716, he repeats the argument from St. Cyprian : “I persuade myself,” he says, “you will not be biassed by the common *evasion* of St. Cyprian’s testimony. He could not use the eighth verse in the words of the seventh till he had first proved those words to be the meaning of the eighth, which he has not attempted.” The conclusion of this letter might plead an apology,

which, however, the letters do not seem to require. "I have not the honour," he says, "to be of the Christian Ministry, but, having met with disappointments in secular affairs, am the more desirous to secure an eternal interest; and my thoughts of the influence of this noble passage thereupon have created you this and the former trouble."

Bentley, however, "finding how much the question interested the public mind, and perceiving that there was expected from the editor of the New Testament a clear expression of opinion on this point, applied himself in the course of the four following months to examine all the evidence on both sides. Having chosen this as the subject of his Prælection, in which, according to the account given in the manuscript journal of Atwood, the esquire beadle, who was present, "he read away the text to the utmost of his power," he gave a regular

history of the verse, and of the manner in which the passage of St. John is quoted by ancient writers ; and concluded with a decided rejection of the verse ; maintaining at the same time the doctrine of the Trinity, in its orthodox acceptation, and showing that it stood not in any need of such dubious support.”* This Prælection was delivered before a crowded audience on May 1 ; the day before his [self] election to the Regius Professorship of Divinity.

The Arians looked with great interest to the conclusion of Bentley’s labours. Emlyn, in his answer to Martin, dated January 24, 1718, quotes, from the letter above mentioned, “the decisive words of that transcendent critical genius of this age ;” omitting, however, the passage in which he spoke of the result as not yet clear. “Now if these twenty so ancient copies,” he says, “all agree in wanting that

* Monk’s *Life*, *sup. cit.* pp. 17, 18.

verse (as I am satisfied none supposes they agree in having it), we may see what credit is due to Mr. Martin's strongest imaginations. Here is plain *fact* against his extravagant fancies. And I doubt not, when the Doctor, who alone appears to be *par huic negotio*, shall gratify the expecting world with his noble performance, things will be set in a yet clearer light."

In 1720 the proposals for this edition were published, and we trace its progress at intervals for nine years later. "This great design of the New Testament," says his biographer, "for the execution of which he stood peculiarly pledged, it is certain, notwithstanding the universal notion of the contrary, . . . that he had never for a moment abandoned."* "In 1729," says Bishop Monk, "he appears to have resumed the task of his New Testament, with

* Monk's *Life*, ii. 239.

a resolution of discharging his debt to the public, and at the same time supplying a practical answer to those who accused him of passing ‘an irreligious life.’ His attention was now directed to two particulars: the evidence respecting the disputed verse of St. John, and the collation of the Vatican MS.”

“From the character of Bentley’s inquiries,” says Bishop Monk, “I apprehend that it was his intention to introduce a discussion upon the controverted verse in the *Prolegomena* of his edition. It appears from the letter of his correspondent at Rome, dated July 9, 1729, that Dr. Bentley had urged dispatch, and was in great haste to receive those extracts from the Vatican. This urgency, and the fact that, in the copy from which he designed to print his edition, both text and notes were in as great forwardness as his materials allowed, make it probable that he

waited only for the completion of the collation of the Vatican MS. to send his book to the press. After this time," Bishop Monk goes on to say, "I discover no trace of his being occupied upon his projected edition: the contest which he waged with his prosecutors allowed him but little intermission for several years; and in those short intervals other literary objects were pressed upon him; and when at length greater leisure arrived, it found him disabled by age for the exertion requisite to complete the work."* The same suggestion is made by the more recent editor of the "*Bentleii Critica Sacra*," in his publication of Bentley's "*Manuscripts*," preserved in Trinity College Library.

This may, possibly, be the true solution of the mystery; but there was certainly something extraordinary in the sudden collapse of

* Monk's *Life*, ii. pp. 286-9.

the undertaking, when it seemed on the verge of completion. Bentley, it appears, “had himself collated the Alexandrian Codex, and that of Beza. Wetstein, meanwhile, furnished an accurate collation of the Codex Ephraemi, for which Bentley gave him fifty pounds. The subscriptions already amounted to two thousand guineas; and the specimen appended to the Proposals, containing the 22nd chapter of the Apocalypse, represented the progress which had really been made on the whole work. Bentley appears to have been waiting for the collation of the Vatican Codex; the results of which, when it arrived, led him to alter his judgment in very many passages. “As Mico,” the Italian, “was now dead, he engaged the Abbé Riddotti to complete the work; and the sheets which contained his collation were transmitted to Bentley by Dr. Stosch, July 9, 1729. “After this date,” says Mr. Ellis, “there is

no evidence to show that he took any further pains to publish his great work. Wetstein asserts in his *Prolegomena*, that Bentley abandoned it in disgust, upon the refusal of the Government to allow the paper for his edition to be imported free of duty. But as this occurred in 1721, and as we find Bentley actively prosecuting the work until 1729, we cannot believe that he succumbed to this disappointment.”*

It is difficult, I think, to resist the impression that the results of Bentley's collations of MSS. were a disappointment to him ; and it is clear now, that the anticipations which he so confidently expressed when he first put forth his programme could not be realized. He certainly found himself unable to fulfil what he had proposed, by abstaining from

* “*Bentleii Critica Sacra*,” edited by the Rev. A. E. Ellis, p. 86.

conjectural emendations of the text. "It is due, no doubt, to Bentley's memory," as his careful editor observes, "to remind the reader that he only designed to give them a place in the *Prolegomena* to his edition, being resolved to print nothing in the text for which he had not MS. authority." Doubtless this was his original intention, as declared in the "Proposals for Printing;" notwithstanding this the conjectures made their way into the notes, and in no small number. The last note, meanwhile, on St. John's First Epistle ought to be given here:—

"Verses 7, 8. ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ—ἐν τῇ γῇ omittunt Cod. A., omnes Wetstenii, Syr. Copt. Æth. Cyprian. 109: Et iterum de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto scriptum est, 'et *hi* tres unum sunt.' Ubi plures MSS. et Reg omitt. *hi*. De hoc loco vide '*Bibliothèque Critique*' (4 vols. 8vo.), vol. iii. p. 94, &c."

Whiston, sometime before this, referring to Dr. Bentley, spoke of him as having “read a very learned lecture at Cambridge, to prove” the verse in St. John “to be spurious. But,” he went on to report, “he dares not now wholly to omit it in the text of his edition of the New Testament, which he has promised, but not yet performed.”

The Arian party, having failed in their attempt to get the verse condemned by the Church of England, put forth in 1729 an edition of the New Testament in Greek and English, edited by Dr. Mace; in which various passages were altered in conformity with the Arian creed. It claimed to give “the original text, corrected from the authority of the most authentic MSS., and a new version agreeably to the illustrations of the most learned commentators and critics, with notes and various readings.” “The Greek-English

editor of the New Testament in 1729," says Porson, "threw the verse out of his text, and subjoined a long note to the place; which, though it is apparently written with great labour, does not deserve the praises bestowed upon it by Sosipater ('Commentaries and Essays,' vol. i. p. 145)." It had been described as "A note of some extent, full of great learning upon the subject, and all the information that was then to be had; and written in so agreeable a way and with such distinction and clearness of argument, that it deserves to be drawn out of the place of a note, and printed by itself for general use." Whatever may be thought of the fairness exhibited in this laborious note, it certainly showed wisdom in omitting all reference to Tertullian and Cyprian, as well as to St. Eucherius. "Twells refuted this editor, after his manner," is Porson's contemptuous notice of the learned

and careful "Critical Examination of the late New Text and Version of the Greek Testament," which appeared in 1731; and which fully exposed, as has been more justly said, the arbitrary alterations and bold criticisms of the Arian version. According to Porson's statement, Dr. Twells "scarcely quits Martin, except in giving up the spurious 'Prologue,' and appealing to the new-found testimony of Cassiodorus." As to the "Prologue," it had been given up, as Twells remarks, by Mill and other advocates for the genuineness of the verse; and Martin, as the controversy then stood, was the Annotator's only adversary on this point.

Dr. Twells brings forward again the suppressed passage from Cyprian, observing that "This noble testimony invincibly proves that the passage was in approved copies of the third century. No endeavours, therefore," he

says, "have been wanting among the enemies of the text to wrest this argument out of our hands. But in vain. For to say, as some do, that it is a mystical interpretation of the eighth verse, is to ascribe an interpretation to the age of Cyprian which probably was first invented by St. Augustine, 150 years after. Besides granting this exposition to have been as old as Cyprian, unless it should further appear that he was wont to cite expositions of Scripture, that were not in the copies of his time, as Scripture, it cannot be deemed probable that he has done so in the passage cited. But of all the Fathers, Greek or Latin, no one is more remarkable for citing Scripture *verbatim* than St. Cyprian. It is therefore trifling in Le Clerc to conclude from Tertullian and Optatus that no African writer can be depended on in that respect. For it is not the character of the age nor of the country that is

to be attended to in such a dispute, but the known practice of the particular writer in question. And since, in a case on which so much depends, our adversaries have not been able to produce so much as a single instance where St. Cyprian departs from the letter of his copy in citing Scripture, we may insist upon it that the words in dispute were in some of the exemplars before the middle of the third century." This publication of Dr. Twells seems to bring us to the close of the second period of the controversy, which had begun about sixty years before with the attacks of Sandius and Simon, and which, since the publication of Bishop Fell's "Cyprian" in 1682, had turned mainly (as Emlyn remarked in his first publication) on the authority of this Father.

In 1754 appeared "Two Letters from Sir Isaac Newton to Mr. Le Clerc," one of them

containing a Dissertation on this text. It was written, indeed, as Porson remarks, “soon after the appearance of Simon’s book, between the years 1690 and 1700;” but as it was not published till the period in question, it seems most proper to mention it here. In this Dissertation, according to Porson’s statement, Sir Isaac Newton “collected, arranged, and strengthened Simon’s argument, and gave a clear, exact, and comprehensive view of the whole question.”

In enumerating the arguments alleged for the verses, he mentions first the authority of Cyprian. After quoting Cyprian’s words in the “De Unitate,” he observes that, “the Socinians here deal too injuriously with Cyprian, while they would have this place corrupted; for Cyprian in another place (Epist. ‘ad Jubaian.’) repeats the same thing. These places of Cyprian being,” he says, “in

my opinion genuine, seem so apposite, that I should never have suspected a mistake could I but have reconciled it with the ignorance I meet with of this reading in the next age, among the Latins of both Africa and Europe, as well as among the Greeks.” Sir Isaac therefore adopts the supposition of the words, “tres unum sunt,” being quoted from the eighth verse; referring to Eucherius, Bishop of Lyons—contemporary, as he says, with St. Austin—for proof that the seventh verse was wanting in his time, and that many then adopted the mystical interpretation of the eighth verse; and also to St. Austin (“c. Maxim.” lib. iii.) as “one of those many;” adding that “even without this testimony, it was obvious for Cyprian or any man else of that opinion to say, ‘de Patre, Filio, et Spiritu Sancto scriptum, est,’ &c.” He then refers to Facundus, who, he says, “tells us

expressly that Cyprian so understood the text." "This *at least*"—he adds (as though he felt some misgivings as to the certainty of his conclusion), "this *at least*—may be gathered from the passage of Facundus, that *some* in those early ages interpreted Cyprian after this manner." He then urges the argument drawn from the occurrence of the word "Filius," instead of "Verbum," in St. Cyprian; and meets the argument which might be brought from the common reading of the eighth verse being "*hi tres in unum sunt*," by the remark that the Latins for the most part read it as Cyprian quotes it. He concludes therefore that, "the testimony of Cyprian is of no force for proving the truth of the seventh verse;" but "that, on the contrary, for disproving it we have the testimony of Facundus, St. Austin, Eucherius, and those, among others, whom Eucherius mentions."

Sir Isaac Newton's only difficulty in regard to Cyprian was the supposed ignorance of this reading in the age next to Cyprian's; "but for this, the places, he candidly owns," in opposition to the Socinians in what he regards as their injurious treatment of Cyprian, "seemed so apposite," that "he should never have suspected a mistake."

But though Sir Isaac Newton adds so little on this point to "strengthen" Simon's argument, it may be well to mention one or two particulars in which he deals more fairly than Simon with facts, and also to point out a fatal objection to his general "view of the whole question."

Instead, then, of Victor Vitensis, who, according to Simon's statement, lived 100 years after Jerome, and "is the first who seems to have quoted the passage," Sir Isaac Newton says that, "*Eugenius*, Bishop of Carthage, in

the seventh year of Hunneric, A.D. 484, in the summary of his faith exhibited to the king, cited it the first of any man, so far as I can find." "I have no objection," says Travis, "to this remark, save that the summary of faith, here spoken of, is described as the creed of Eugenius alone; and that he is said to have been the first who cited this text."

With regard to "the history" which Newton gives of this, the one, as he styles it, of "two notable corruptions of Christianity" (the other being the text (1 Tim. iii. 16) concerning the great "mystery of godliness"); and which "history," or rather theory, is this—that, "first, some of the Latins interpreted the Spirit, Water, and Blood, of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to prove them One;" that, "then Jerome, for the same end, inserted the Trinity in express words in his Version;"

that, "out of him the Africans began to allege it against the Vandals, about sixty-four years after his death," &c. &c., it may be asked, independently of the question of the mystical interpretation, and the date of its introduction into the Church, and again of the character of St. Jerome, how it happens that, while the reading of the Vulgate is, "*tres sunt qui testimonium dant*," the Africans, if they took their citation out of the Vulgate, should so constantly quote it under the form, "*tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent*." It certainly looks like a different version.

We may now pass on to Dr. Benson, whose "Paraphrase on the Catholic Epistles" appeared in 1756. In entering upon the discussion of this verse, he says that he has read Dr. Mill, Father Simon, Dr. Thomas Smith, Erasmus, Casley, Clericus, the New Version of the New Testament, with the remarks thereon of Twells

and others, and, above all, Martin, Calamy, and Emlyn. He says of Emlyn that he had "removed his scruples;" and follows him in quoting only the latter part of the sentence from St. Cyprian; the reference to the passage in St. John's Gospel, "very material to the argument," as has been truly said, "being unfairly passed by and omitted." He brings no new argument into the field. There is the old query, "Whether Cyprian designed to quote the seventh verse, or to give a mystical interpretation of the eighth verse;" the old remark that "the loose manner in which the Fathers sometimes quoted might create a suspicion;" but that "there is more in this case than the general suspicion." Then follows the reference to Eucherius ("De Quæst. Difficil."), though, as Travis points out, "Dr. Benson had read, *before* he began his critical labours on this text, not only Mr. Martin's

“Dissertation” (which contains the quotation from the ‘*Formulæ*’ of Eucherius, in which the seventh verse occurs), but also Mr. Emlyn’s notice of it, in his “Reply” to Martin; in which he confesses that, if that passage were genuine, Mr. Martin had some reason to say that it was *decisive*, as to the passage having been read in the fifth century. Dr. Benson confesses *both*, in the outset of his own disquisitions.” Next comes, in due order, “Facundus, who flourished,” we are told, “in the fifth century” (it ought to have been, the sixth), “and was of the same African church, and who did not only himself interpret the words of the eighth verse in that mystical manner, but has acquainted us that Cyprian, the Martyr, did so understand them.” “Fulgentius,” indeed, Dr. Benson admits, “who was contemporary with Facundus—rather who lived nearly half a century before him—has

been thought to represent Cyprian as quoting the words from St. John." But then Fulgentius "says, 'So Cyprian confesses.' 'Confesses what?' says Dr. Benson, implicitly following Emlyn: "That these very words were in the Epistle of St. John? What a mighty matter was that; to confess what he found in the writings of an Apostle! But to confess, or acknowledge, that by the Water, the Blood, and the Spirit, were meant the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, was a very remarkable *confession*; and what those who hold the same opinion would be glad to find so eminent a father and martyr *confessing*." He anticipates the objection, "Yes (you will say), but interpreting is one thing, and saying 'So it is written' is quite a different thing." He meets it by repeating, after Emlyn, that Cyprian has in other instances quoted Scripture more by "his sense

of it than by repeating the words of the text." The two instances which Emlyn has given are duly copied, "which were not different readings," Dr. Benson decides somewhat more dogmatically than Emlyn, "but Cyprian's own interpretations." Finally he asks, in equally servile following of his master, "Why might not he (Cyprian) give the sense in his own words, and say 'De Patre,' &c. For my own part, I make no doubt but that was the fact."

We may now proceed to Wetstein's and Griesbach's editions of the Greek Testament: the former published, as above stated, in 1751; the latter, in its complete form, in 1777, the Apostolical Epistles and the Apocalypse having been published two years earlier. Wetstein's edition should, in strict chronological order, as has been already said, have stood at the head of this third period of

the controversy ; but, beside the prominent part which the writers whom we have been last considering have taken in the controversy, their arguments were so closely connected with those of the earlier writers, Simon and Emlyn, that it seemed better to discuss them first. Besides, to quote Porson's Preface to his "Letters," though "Wetstein and Griesbach have in their respective editions given judicious abridgments of the authorities and arguments on both sides," yet, "from the necessary brevity of notes, some previous information is requisite, before they can be perfectly understood."

It certainly requires much previous information to be able to gather from Wetstein's list of Latin Fathers any idea of the real merits of the question ; but with that previous information, the "Abridgment of the authorities and arguments" which he has given on

the one side of the question seems well entitled to the epithet "judicious," but could scarcely be called *fair*. Tertullian is cited, and then Cyprian; followed by Augustine. Of Cyprian, Wetstein says, that without doubt in writing thus he followed his master Tertullian, quoting the eighth verse, and added the rest as an interpretation: "Ita sentit Facundus," he adds. Then comes Phæbadius [A.D. 359], of whose reference to the words, "tres unum sunt," Wetstein simply remarks, "ex Tertulliano." Then follow in chronological order Marcus Celedensis, Marius Victorinus Afer [A.D. 362], Eucherius [A.D. 434], Vigilius of Tapsum [A.D. 484], and then Fulgentius [A.D. 507]. In the passage from Fulgentius he prints the word "confitetur" in Italics, observing that, if Fulgentius had read the names of the Three Divine Persons, "totidem verbis," in St. John, he would not

have used the word "confitetur," which is with greater propriety used of sense and interpretation. These points have been already sufficiently noticed. We may therefore pass on to Griesbach's edition.

Griesbach again goes over the old line of argument. He says, "*Legisse vulgo creduntur Tertullianus . . . et Cyprianus, Tertulliani admirator et imitator.*" With the passages of Cyprian he bids us compare Facundus: from whose citation, however, conscious of the argument to be drawn from the occurrence of the words, "in terrâ," he, without any evidence (in a note) expunges those words as *probably* inserted from the Vulgate by some editor or copyist: "Conferri etiam potest," he goes on, "de allegoricâ interpretatione Eucherius, August. 'c. Maxim.' c. 22. cf. 'De Civ. Dei.' v. 11." He refers to Fulgentius as a writer (as he represents him) of nearly the

middle of the sixth century (*“sæculi sexti fere medii scriptorem”*), though it will be remembered that he was bishop in 507, and died in 533. Fulgentius, Griesbach admits, read the seventh verse in his text, and therefore did not suppose that Cyprian interpreted it mystically. But from this opinion of Fulgentius, resting as it does upon no testimony or probable argument, he says, “no such inference can in any wise be drawn as the defenders of the seventh verse would desire.” Bengel, he remarks further, did not think that the interpretation in question was in the style of Cyprian: in reply to this he refers to Cyprian’s interpretation of the mystery of our Lord’s coat, and of the three hours of prayer.

The force of this argument—the only one which Griesbach offers—will be estimated, if we compare the manner in which St. Cyprian draws out of those two passages of Scripture

the mystical meaning which he traces in them, with the manner in which he refers to the passage in St. John.

The passage in St. Cyprian stands thus:—

“The Lord saith, ‘I and the Father are One:’ and again of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost it is written, ‘and these three are One.’ And does any one believe that this unity, proceeding from the divine immutability, cohering by heavenly mysteries (*sacramentis cœlestibus cohærentem*), can be rent in the Church, and separated by the divorce of contending wills? He who does not hold this unity does not hold the law of God, does not hold the faith of the Father and the Son, does not hold life and salvation. This mystery of unity, this bond of concord inseparably cohering, is shown, when in the Gospel the coat of our Lord Jesus Christ is not divided in any wise nor rent, but is re-

ceived as a whole vesture, an incorrupt and undivided coat, by those who cast lots for the vesture of Christ, who should put on Christ. The divine Scripture speaketh and saith: 'But of the coat, because it was not sewed together from the upper part, but woven throughout, they said among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots whose it shall be.' It carried with it unity coming from the upper part, that is, coming down from heaven and from the Father, which could not in anywise be rent by him who received and possessed it, but obtained at once an entire and solid firmness. . . . By the mystery (sacramento) and sign of the coat he declared the unity of the Church."

There is a manifest contrast, assuredly, here between the simple quotation, apparently, of the words of Scripture and the elaborate setting forth of a mystical sense supposed

to lie hidden under the letter of the sacred history.

In 1763, Bowyer published his edition of the Greek Testament, “Ad fidem Græcorum solum MSS. nunc primum expressum, adstipulante Jo. Jac. Wetstenio.” In this edition Wetstein’s emendations were adopted. Bowyer says that St. Cyprian does not quote the verse, *totidem verbis*, as the text is now read, though Bishop Pearson, he tells us (meaning Bishop Fell), rather too strongly asserts, “Cyprianum *citasse* ante Hieronymi tempora.” “The words of Cyprian,” he says, “are . . . ‘et hi tres in unum sunt,’ and in another place (‘Epist. ad P. Julianum’ [‘Ad Jubaianum’] p. 223, Ed. Pearson [Fell]) . . . ‘cum tres unum sint,’” and adds, “It is certain St. Cyprian does not cite it in terms from the text, nor yet in both places agreeably to himself.” Still further, that “he

does not say in either, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus Sanctus, but in the former . . . Filius . . . and in the latter Creator, Christus, et Spiritus Sanctus." Moreover, that the Montanists, soon after this time, generally interpreted the eighth verse mystically; "and, if so, it will be no hard thing to suppose Cyprian to do the same."

Upon Bowyer's "Critical Conjectures," it is scarcely necessary to remark, with Travis, that, in the correct text of the "De Unitate," "Cyprian *does* quote the verse, totidem verbis (as far as his words are meant to be a quotation); and "that, therefore, Bishop Fell's assertion is not too strong;" the other passage, in the Epistle "ad Jubaianum," being "rather an allusion or a reference than a direct quotation;" that in the former instance he meant to quote directly only the concluding clause of the verse; and that, as to

the Montanists (who began long before, not after the time of Cyprian), it is of no consequence how they interpreted the eighth verse, unless it could be proved that the seventh verse did not exist in their time.

The publication, in 1781, of the third volume of Gibbon's History, with its reference to the persecution by the Arian Vandals in Africa, and an offensive passage and note on the text concerning "The Heavenly Witnesses," led to a reopening of the controversy in regard to the authenticity of the verse. It called forth, within a few years, Mr. Travis's "Letters to Gibbon" (1784), and, in reply, Porson's "Letters to Travis" (1790).

As regards St. Cyprian's testimony, Porson begins the discussion by reducing the two passages in his writings to the one from the "De Unitate," observing that the other passage "receives all its force from" this. He next

allows that Cyprian, when he says, "De Patre, etc., scriptum est" (where it is to be observed that Porson follows Emlyn and Benson in omitting the preceding reference to St. John's Gospel), affirms the words which follow, 'it is written,' to be extant in Scripture." "But," he observes, "it has been a question ever since the time of Simon," whether Cyprian quotes our present seventh verse, or only mystically applies the eighth; "and the second supposition," he avers, "is so strongly supported by the authority of Facundus" that his opponent, he anticipates, "will find some difficulty in setting aside his testimony." He should rather have said, his *opinion*; for the utmost that Porson attempts to prove is, first, that Facundus "himself knew nothing of the seventh verse, and, secondly, that Cyprian, in his *opinion*, knew no more." . . . "Why, then," he repeats

after Dr. Benson, "might not Cyprian give the sense of 1 John v. 8, in his own words, and say, 'Of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost it is written, these three are One?'" We need not go again over ground already traversed by Emlyn and Benson; Porson only adding a larger measure of special personalities against his not very well armed antagonist.

"Facundus," Porson goes on to say, "has the following sentence: 'Joannes Apostolus in Epistolâ suâ de Patre, et Filio, et Spiritu Sancto sic dicit: Tres sunt, etc. . . . et hi tres unum sunt.' If Facundus," he argues, "had only quoted these words, and not been imprudent enough to quote and explain at length, he would have been, with you," says Porson, "a positive evidence for the authenticity of the seventh verse; but at present, unhappily, the blank is filled up with 'in terrâ

Spiritus, aqua, et sanguis.’ I would observe,” Porson proceeds to say, “that Facundus uses the word *dicit*, and is just as peremptory in the application of the eighth verse as Cyprian is in the application of his supposed seventh.” He tells us that, “a little after Facundus says, ‘Non ergo ait Joannes Apostolus loquens de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto, Tres sunt personæ,’” &c. Facundus, we see, affirming that the Apostle speaks of the Trinity, affirms it in terms equally forcible with Cyprian’s ‘scriptum est;’ and yet we are certain that Facundus applies only the eighth verse; we have, therefore, a right to conclude that Cyprian does the same. If Facundus had been as reserved as Cyprian, and only quoted a part of the eighth verse, as I have done,” says Porson, “for him; if then the testimony of a later writer should be produced to this effect, ‘Quod testimonium

Beatus Facundus de Patre, Filio, et Spiritu Sancto dictum intelligit,' you would reject it with as much contempt, and as little reason, as you now reject the same testimony given by Facundus concerning Cyprian."

It is really difficult, when one comes to analyze such a piece of reasoning as this, to comprehend how it can have ever claimed the character of scholarly criticism. If Facundus had been as reserved as St. Cyprian, and referred to the passage in the way which Porson describes, doubtless he would have appeared a positive evidence for the authenticity of the seventh verse; for, with the citation of the words, "et hi tres unum sunt," and the assertion that St. John so spake of the Three Persons of the Ever-blessed Trinity, it would have been concluded that there was something in the preceding context, or otherwise, which proved that such was really the

subject of the proposition. But Facundus, it is said, "is just as peremptory in the application of the eighth verse as St. Cyprian is in the application of his supposed seventh." "Just as peremptory in the application!"—when he immediately goes on to explain how it is that he can venture to apply the eighth verse in this way; whereas Cyprian makes no such elaborate "application" of it in any sense, nor any defence of his interpretation. On the other hand, Facundus, explaining immediately how he applies the eighth verse ("in Spiritu *significans* Patrem, in aqua Spiritum Sanctum, in sanguine vero Filium *significans*), "at last seems," to use Porson's own words, "so apprehensive that his adversaries may possibly object to his explanation," that, "therefore, he reserves as his strongest argument the authority of Cyprian: 'Aut si forsitan ipsi Trinitatem,

quæ unus Deus est, nolunt intelligi, secundum ipsa verba quæ posuit pro Apostolo Joanne, respondeant—Quod tamen Joannis Apostoli testimonium B. Cyprianus de Patre, et Filio, et Spiritu Sancto intelligit ait enim, &c.’ “Such a thundering proof as this,” says Porson, “left no room for objection; in the progress, therefore, of his dispute, he refers to this place again, and takes it for granted, that he has undeniably proved his point.” And yet, while Facundus felt he had all this difficulty to contend with, though he was only putting forth an interpretation which (on the hypothesis) had been current for some three centuries or more in the Western Church, and which, besides St. Cyprian, had been maintained by St. Augustine, a century and a half before, by Eucherius of Lyons, and many others, we are to believe that St. Cyprian needed but to say

“De Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto scriptum est, ‘Et tres unum sunt.’ ”

For, “in truth,” we are told on the other hand, “the allegorical interpretations of the Scripture, given by the ancient writers are so numerous that it would be endless to pursue them.” “We know that they employed it without scruple in all points, whether of doctrine or morals.” Then follows, as in Griesbach, the objection of Bengelius, that St. Cyprian at least was not thus given to allegory; and, in disproof of his assertion, the two instances, which Griesbach had quoted, of our Lord’s coat, and of the hours of prayer. The fact which Porson remarks, that the former passage follows the quotation from 1 John v. is certainly no help to the cause, as it brings into more striking contrast the manner of reference in the two cases. Nor will Whitby, to whom Porson refers, following again in the

train of Emlyn, supply any parallel instance. But "Cyprian is elsewhere negligent in quoting," says Porson. In proof of this we have the citations which Emlyn and Benson had referred to, from Matt. vi. 13, and Rev. xix. 10, to which is added 1 John ii. 17, in which Cyprian five times adds the words, "As God remains for ever." Travis, in answer to Benson, had argued that in Matt. vi. 13, the reading objected to was not the only, and might not be the genuine, reading of the passage in Cyprian, and that in Rev. xix. 10, Cyprian had most probably a different reading; so that in all probability, "the version from whence Cyprian drew his quotations was the old Italic, and that it read the words now in question as Cyprian has quoted them." Porson considers the first of these citations, in which he endeavours to show that the present text of Cyprian is right, and that, in adopting the

gloss, “ne nos patiaris induci in tentationem,” instead of the genuine reading, he was probably deceived by an imperfect recollection of Tertullian, his master; in like manner, as in the Council at Carthage, sec. 6, he had quoted St. John iii. 6, with the spurious addition borrowed from Tertullian *de Carne Christi*, sec. 18. But all this is nothing to the purpose. For in the case before us there is no negligence in quotation; the words, “hi tres unum sunt,” it is admitted on all hands, are the exact words of Scripture. In the two cases of supposed quotation from Tertullian there is the same verbal accuracy.

The testimony of Fulgentius remained to be disposed of; but here Porson deserts the line which had been marked out for him by Emlyn and Benson. He says he “shall grant that Fulgentius quotes our seventh verse, and does not adopt the mystical exposition of the

eighth from Cyprian, as Emlyn pretends. I shall attack Fulgentius's testimony," he says, "upon a new ground. I affirm that it is no testimony at all, except to the genuineness of the passage in Cyprian. Fulgentius fairly confesses," says Porson, "that he became acquainted with this verse solely by the means of Cyprian, and that he had not seen it himself in the copies of the New Testament. Else what does he mean to prove by his appeal to Cyprian? That this verse was genuine? But if it already existed in all the copies, if it were acknowledged both by orthodox and Arians, where was the use or sense of strengthening this general consent by the solitary evidence of Cyprian? But Fulgentius," we are to suppose, "being aware of an objection that the verse was not then extant in St. John's Epistle, shields himself under the authority of Cyprian, and quotes the pas-

sage for genuine Scripture; upon this maxim (which Facundus also adopts, though he applies it in a different way), that Cyprian was infallible. Nor was he singular in this maxim," says Porson, "but agreed with the general opinion that prevailed after Cyprian's martyrdom. For, as Mosheim well observes, 'Cyprian's reputation was so enhanced by his fortitude in suffering a violent death, that he became the common master and oracle of the Church.' . . . It was, therefore, no wonder that Fulgentius should accept a reading which he supposed to be Cyprian's reading of a passage in Scripture; or that Facundus should accept an interpretation which he supposed to be Cyprian's interpretation of Scripture." In adopting this new, and, as Bishop Burgess designated it, "most perverse interpretation," Porson, as the Bishop remarks, applies strangely enough the verb *confitetur* not to Cyprian but

to Fulgentius. Travis had said that "Fulgentius directly and positively represents Cyprian as quoting the seventh verse. Fulgentius' word," Porson replies, "is *confitetur*." "Fulgentius fairly *confesses* (or if you will, *shows, declares, professes*), that he became acquainted with this verse solely by the means of Cyprian." But to pass this by. "What," it is asked, "does he mean to prove by his appeal to Cyprian?" The idea of an appeal to a martyr of the Catholic Church, in proof of an article of Christian faith (the idea, as has already been observed, which clearly belongs to the word in this place), seems one which minds such as those of Emlyn, Benson, and Porson, could not by any possibility enter into. They can think only of authority for a reading, or for an interpretation. But if Fulgentius had been quoting a reading of Scripture, which was not then extant, and wished

to shield himself under Cyprian's authority, in like manner as Facundus, wishing to recommend an interpretation of Scripture, shelters himself, as we have seen, under the same authority, would he not have adopted a similar mode of expression ; and, as Facundus says, "quod Joannis Apostoli testimonium beatus Cyprianus de Patre, etc., dictum intelligit," would not Fulgentius in like manner have said, "quod Joannis Apostoli testimonium Beatus Cyprianus *scriptum esse testatur?*"—or something to the like effect ? Instead of this he says, "In Patre ergo, &c. . . . unitatem substantiæ accipimus, personas confundere non audemus. B. enim Joannes Apostolus testatur dicens, Tres sunt, &c. . . . Quod *etiam* beatissimus Martyr Cyprianus confitetur, dicens, &c." What is the force of "etiam" here ?

But further, the quotation which follows

from St. Cyprian does not prove the reading which Fulgentius had appealed to. For Cyprian supplies no proof of the authenticity of the words, "Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in cœlo, Pater, Verbum, et Spiritus ; et tres unum sunt:" he proves only the existence of the words "et hi tres unum sunt," which would not be disputed. And what is to be said to those passages in which Fulgentius appeals to the same text in St. John, without any reference to St. Cyprian's confession ? as in his book "de Trinitate," cap. iii., a passage which Travis had cited, where, exactly in St. Cyprian's manner, he says, "Therefore saith He, 'I and my Father are one,' teaching us to understand the word 'unum' of nature, 'sumus' of persons. So also that passage, 'There are three,' saith he, 'that bear witness,'" &c. The reference to the same passage in the "Fragmenta contra

Fabianum" (which Du Pin, as Travis had observed, maintains to be the work of Fulgentius) is worthy of notice; both as it shows that the text was commonly quoted in controversy, without hesitation, or appeal to any testimony in its support, and still further as the mode of citation is precisely that which Cyprian employs; except that the "scriptum est" of Cyprian is still more determinate than the "dictum" of Fulgentius. "Beatus vero Joannes Apostolus evidenter ait, 'Et tres unum sunt;' quod *de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto* dictum, sicut superius cum rationem flagitares ostendimus." Surely it is quite clear from the writings of Fulgentius, both that he had himself seen the verse in the copies of the New Testament; and that those with whom he argues had not the objection to offer that the verse was not then extant in St. John's Epistle.

Having thus disposed of Fulgentius, Porson proceeds to offer a theory to explain the quotations in Cyprian. He says, "I think it most probable that Cyprian followed, as he thought, the authority of Tertullian. Finding the phrase 'tres unum sunt' closely joined to 'quomodo dictum est, Ego et Pater unum sumus,' he took the former part of the sentence to be a quotation from Scripture as well as the latter. 'But from what part of Scripture,' would Cyprian say, 'could my master take it, except 1 John v. 8?' I perceive his drift; he interprets the spirit, the water, and the blood of the three Persons of the Trinity, and to them applies the concluding words, *the three are one*. If such an allegorical interpretation once entered Cyprian's head, it would recommend itself to his approbation equally by its own intrinsic merit and the authority of his master. I pay no compli-

ment to De Missy, when I say that he had a clearer and more critical head than Cyprian. Yet he took Bengelius's words for a quotation from Stephens." Then follows Griesbach's instance of the hours of prayer. These last two sentences may serve to show the tone in which Porson discusses the question. But to any one who has not learnt to look upon all the Fathers as men devoid of understanding and common sense, it would hardly seem probable that St. Cyprian would give, as the result of such a ratiocination as Porson supposes on Tertullian's words, a matter-of-fact statement like that with which we are concerned, alleging no authority for it. "*Et iterum de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto scriptum est, et hi tres unum sunt.*"

But another charge still remains behind. The writers who were but just before charged with inaccuracy in quotation are now accused

of servile copying. "The implicit faith with which the Latin writers copy their predecessors often diminishes," we are told, "and sometimes destroys, the value of their testimony. Thus a gloss crept early into some copies of John iii. 6: 'Et quoniam Deus Spiritus est, de Deo natus est.' I believe," says Porson, "Tertullian to be the author of this gloss, who sometimes blends the words of Scripture with his own, so that it requires much skill and pains to make the separation. From him it quickly spread through all the Latin churches." . . . In like manner, it seems, as the words of Tertullian ["cum tres unum sunt"], which have been taken for a quotation from Scripture, "were only a deduction of his own from two texts, John x. 30, xvi. 14," . . . so "St. Cyprian, finding two or three words which happen to follow each other in the same order

(1 John v. 8), immediately succeeded by a formal quotation from Scripture, thought these words also to be a quotation, and employed them without remorse in the sense which, as he imagined, his master had affixed to them." In illustration of this supposition Porson gives us the instance of the hours of prayer over again. Then, "two or three centuries afterwards both Facundus and Fulgentius," it seems, "appealed to this passage of Cyprian. Neither of them could find a text of Scripture where it was expressly said of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, 'these three are one.' Yet Cyprian seemed to affirm it. Facundus, therefore, supposed that Cyprian mixed his own interpretation with the words of Scripture. Fulgentius, on the other hand, being somewhat more sanguine, supposed that he quoted literally the words of Scripture. Finding, therefore, a

kind of counterpart to Cyprian's quotation in 1 John v. 8, he would naturally conclude that the three heavenly witnesses were distinctly mentioned in Cyprian's copy, but had afterwards vanished."

Such is Mr. Porson's theory. It may be well just to exhibit together the phænomena which it is set up to explain. Tertullian had said, "*Ita connexus Patris in Filio et Filii in Paracleto tres efficit cohærentes alterum ex altero; qui tres unum sunt, non unus, quomodo dictum est, Ego et Pater unum sumus.*"

Cyprian.—"*Dicit Dominus, Ego et Pater unum sumus Et iterum de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto scriptum est; et hi tres unum sunt.*"

Fulgentius.—"*In Patre ergo et Filio Spiritu Sancto unitatem substantiæ accipimus, personas confundere non audemus. Beatus*

enim Joannes Apostolus testatur dicens, ‘Tres sunt, &c., et *tres unum sunt*. Quod etiam Beatissimus Martyr Cyprianus confitetur dicens : . . . Atque ut unam ecclesiam unius Dei esse monstraret, hæc confestim testimonia de Scripturis inseruit, Dicit Dominus, &c., et *hi tres unum sunt*.”

Elsewhere.—“Ego, inquit, et Pater unum sumus. Similiter et illud. Tres sunt, inquit. . . . et *hi tres unum sunt*.”

Let us now compare with this the supposed parallel case. “Tertullian,” we are told, “proves by some curious reasons that Daniel’s hours of prayer were the third, the sixth, and the ninth. Cyprian lays his hands upon this piece of news as a great prize, and turns it to good account. . . . He not only asserts it as a fact of Daniel, but adds his three companions, and infers that it denoted the mystery of the Trinity, which was to be

revealed in the last times." Fulgentius has borrowed this argument from Cyprian, and I think," says Mr. Porson, "but I may be partial," he adds sarcastically, "somewhat improved it." After his first citation from Cyprian, he thus proceeds: "For in his book on the Lord's Prayer, to show that the Trinity is of one Deity, without any difference of the Persons, he relates that Daniel and the children were wont to pray at intervals of three hours; where, by the revolution of *three* hours to the duty of *one* prayer, he evidently shows that the Trinity is one God." Now here we have nothing like the case supposed. We have not a gloss of Tertullian's, fastened on to Scripture and quoted as Scripture by Cyprian, and then Fulgentius ascribing it positively to a sacred writer, and asserting that Cyprian took it out of Scripture. We have here an assertion by

Tertullian of a fact, or supposed fact, of history; Cyprian taking it as fact, adding to it, and drawing out of it a mystical meaning; Fulgentius, lastly, quoting Cyprian, and finding further mysteries. More particularly, and to quote Porson's own representation of the case, Tertullian having proved, or attempted to prove, an historical fact, "then comes Cyprian, takes the fact for granted, asserts the same of Daniel's three companions, and hence elicits the doctrine of the Trinity. Whoever could argue at this rate," says Porson, "could with equal or greater ease find the same doctrine in such an expression as 'the three are one,' though the literal sense seemed ever so foreign to his subject." But this does not touch the question. The question is not whether Cyprian would find the doctrine in Tertullian's expression, "*hi tres unum sunt*" (though this is what seems

after all to be so offensive to Porson as to perplex his views of the whole question), but whether he would then fix it on to Scripture, and, after quoting from Scripture the words “Ego et Pater unum sumus,” immediately add, without a word of explanation, “Et iterum de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto *scriptum est*, ‘Et hi tres unum sunt.’” “If you think, sir,” says Porson to his adversary, “that it derogates from the honour of Cyprian or Fulgentius to insinuate that they could, in matters of such importance, blindly follow their leaders, you ought to recollect that I pass no harsher censure upon them than I have passed upon you with respect to Mr. Martin—a censure whose justice you cannot help feeling in your mind, whether you choose to express it or no.”

This is his manner of conducting the controversy, and it produces its effects on his

readers. In the next letter, some seventy pages onwards (p. 347), he comes to Fulgentius in his chronological place. Of Fulgentius he there says, "I have already spoken in part. If you object that, though he refers to Cyprian in one place, which may seem to hint that the state of MSS. made such a reference necessary, in another passage he quotes 1 John v. 7 without suspicion, I answer that this will not prove Fulgentius had better authority in one instance than in the other." Here Mr. Porson has recourse to his usual tactics. He says, "I remember that Mr. Jones, in his 'Full Answer to an Essay on Spirit,' quotes 1 John v. 7 without suspicion, and from that and John x. 30 charges the author whom he is answering with blasphemy. Should we not think that for such a purpose none but certain and acknowledged texts would be quoted? Yet the same gentleman,

in his 'Catholic Doctrine,' confesses that there has been much dispute concerning this text, and adds his own reasons for believing it genuine."

That is to say, Mr. Jones, himself believing this passage to be genuine, omitted to refer to the dispute concerning it, which in another place he makes mention of. In both places alike, he gives proof that he read it in his Bible. In the case of Fulgentius there is no such diversity between the two passages. There is only, in the one case, Mr. Porson's hypothesis, which in the other proves to be inadmissible. In his final summing up, Porson's statement is: "Fulgentius, indeed, quotes Cyprian's authority for the modern reading; but, from the manner of his appeal, it appears that he could not quote the verse upon the faith of copies of his own age, and therefore relied on the faith as he supposed of Cyprian's copy (p. 400)." The reader of these

pages will be in a condition, it is hoped, to form his own judgment on Porson's management of the facts of the case. There have not been wanting, since his time, those who have declared some of the arguments which have built up the general conclusion arrived at to be, in their opinion, "arbitrary and unsatisfactory hypotheses."

A brief reference must be made, before we leave the subject, to the revival of the controversy by Bishop Burgess. The Bishop, at that time, of St. David's, afterwards of Salisbury, published, in 1821, "A Vindication of St. John v. 7, from the Objections of M. Griesbach;" the first of a series of publications put forth by the Bishop with great earnestness to the time of his death in 1837. In reference to Fulgentius, the Bishop observes that "Mr. Porson says, that Fulgentius fairly confesses that he became acquainted with this verse

solely by the means of Cyprian. I can find in these words," says the Bishop, "no trace of such confession, but the very reverse. And so the words of Fulgentius were understood by Griesbach, who says Fulgentius evidently had the seventh verse in his copy;" and Fulgentius "asserts that Cyprian quoted it from the Scriptures." The Bishop adds, "in another passage, Mr. Porson says, 'Fulgentius, being aware of an objection, that the verse was not then extant in St. John's Epistle, shields himself under the authority of Cyprian.' This," says the Bishop, "is all a mistake undoubtedly. Fulgentius quotes St. John as his *authority* for the doctrine, and Cyprian as *holding the same faith*. Testatur Joannes—confitetur Cyprianus. It is St. John that testifies; Cyprian only follows his testimony."

There appeared in 1827 a large reply to Bishop Burgess in the form of "A Vindi-

cation of the Literary Character of the late Professor Porson from the Animadversions of” Bishop Burgess “in various publications on 1 John v. 7, by Crito Cantabrigiensis.” The writer under this *nom de plume* was Dr. Thomas Turton, at that time Regius Professor of Divinity, afterwards Bishop of Ely. On the subject of Fulgentius, he remarks, “With regard to the expression ‘this is all a mistake undoubtedly,’ I shall consider it to have originated in a strong conviction of being in the right ; and must observe that, in general, there will be wisdom in *not* applying expressions of this kind to Mr. Porson.” He goes on to express what he gives as the feeling of his own mind. “When a point of faith is delivered in the words of an Apostle, it is of no consequence whether it is held by Cyprian or not. In short, it is hardly possible to suppose that Fulgentius should have introduced

Cyprian as the witness to the truth of the doctrine of St. John ; but we can easily imagine that, so far as he could, he would be glad to avail himself of Cyprian as a witness to the genuineness of a dubious quotation" (pp. 276-7). Only, it must be observed, Mr. Porson did consider that Cyprian, the martyr, was regarded as something like a sacred authority for doctrine, and bestowed his sarcasms accordingly. And there remains the difficulty of Mr. Porson's apparent interpretation of the word "confitetur," as applied to Cyprian. It is, moreover, to be observed that it is not primarily the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, but the unity of the Church, as derived from and reflecting the Unity of Persons in the Godhead, of which St. Cyprian and Fulgentius after him were speaking.

A second edition of Bishop Burgess's "Inquiry" contained a reply to an able article in

the *Quarterly Review* (vol. xxvi. pp. 324-341) ; in which, however, it had been stated, that the passage in St. Cyprian “presents by far the strongest evidence that has been adduced in favour of the verse.” “The expression, ‘Scriptum est,’ it was fully admitted, certainly implies that the words which follow, ‘Et hi tres unum sunt,’ were extant in Scripture ; and, connected as they are with the mention of the three Persons of the Trinity, *the natural conclusion seems to be*, that reference is made to the seventh verse of this chapter.” In regard to Fulgentius, the reviewer observes that “Mr. Porson contends that Fulgentius by his own confession became acquainted with the seventh verse solely by the means of Cyprian ; *but,*” he adds, “*we are far from being convinced by the learned Professor’s arguments on the subject.* In our opinion, which may yet plausibly be

disputed, the legitimate inference from the words of Fulgentius is, that he had the verse in his copy of the Latin version." As regards the questions which remain, as the reviewer suggests, in regard to quotations from Scripture in the writings of the Fathers, Cyprian "*may* have had the passage of Tertullian in his mind," and "he *may* have confounded" the two verses in St. John; but, as matter of fact, he does not, it appears from his writings, quote Scripture "from memory," but, on the contrary, with all that "formal exactness which we now require, and which would do credit to a writer of our own days."

In 1829 Bishop Burgess returned to the conflict in "A Letter to the Reverend Thomas Benyon, Archdeacon of Cardigan, in reply to a Vindication of the Literary Character of Professor Porson, by Crito Cantabrigiensis." In regard to St. Cyprian and Fulgentius, and

Mr. Porson's assertion that Fulgentius "fairly confesses that he became acquainted with this verse *solely by the means of Cyprian*," the Bishop observes that this is "an assertion with which even Crito cannot bring himself to be 'in exact agreement.' Fulgentius first, *in his own name*, quotes this testimony of St. John for the *unity of substance* in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and afterwards, *in Cyprian's name*, quotes the same passage together with John x. 30, as Cyprian's proof of the *unity of the Church* from the unity of the Godhead; 'ut *unam Ecclesiam unius Dei* esse monstraret.' Cyprian quotes the words of St. John for one purpose, and Fulgentius for another. Yet Mr. Porson says that Fulgentius, 'being aware of an objection that the verse was not extant in St. John's Epistle, shields himself under the authority of Cyprian,' and confesses that he

had ‘not seen the verse himself in the copies of the New Testament.’ But this is all mistake undoubtedly, as I once said, and must now repeat, though Crito should again remind me that ‘there will be wisdom in *not* applying expressions of that kind to the opinions of Mr. Porson.’ Fulgentius certainly does not confess, nor intimate, that he had not seen the verse in copies of the New Testament, nor express the slightest suspicion of the genuineness of the verse. But, if he does not, ‘what else (says Mr. Porson) does he mean to prove by his appeal to Cyprian? That the verse was genuine? His appeal is to St. John, and not to Cyprian, for the unity of the Three Divine Persons. But he alleges Cyprian’s conformity to that doctrine, and quotes it as Cyprian’s proof of the unity of the Church. Fulgentius clearly had the verse in his copy of St. John’s Epistle,

and he does not insinuate any doubt that Cyprian had it in his. But if it already existed (says Mr. Porson) in all the copies, where was the use and sense of strengthening this general consent by the solitary evidence of Cyprian? The general consent to the genuineness of the verse needed no aid, nor was the passage of Cyprian alleged for such purpose. Even Griesbach concludes from the words of Fulgentius that *he* had the verse in *his* copy—in codice suo comma 7 reperisse—and that on that account he was persuaded that Cyprian had the verse in *his* ‘persuasum fuisse a Cypriano jam lectum esse comma.’

“That Cyprian’s words are a quotation of the seventh verse of St. John,” Bishop Burgess goes on to say, “no one ever doubted, before Facundus, nor after him (as far as we know), till his mystical notions

concerning the eighth verse were revived by Simon; ‘since whose time it has been made a question (says Mr. Porson) whether Cyprian quotes the seventh verse, or only applies the eighth by a mystical interpretation to the Trinity;’ an interpretation which has not the slightest authority from the words of Cyprian, and which, on every rational view of the passage, must be considered, as Mill calls it, *coacta et detorta—incesta et lubrica—futilis et nugatoria*. Mr. Porson himself calls it *forced, indirect, and unnatural*.”

In reference to the remark which Bishop Burgess had made as to Mr. Porson’s being “undoubtedly mistaken,” and Crito’s saying there would “be wisdom in not applying expressions of that kind to the opinions of Mr. Porson,” the Bishop observes that, “the temerity of supposing Mr. Porson to be mistaken in his opinions of a great theological

question, intimately connected not only with the external, but with the internal evidence of Scripture, will be mitigated by Crito's acknowledgment that, at the time of Mr. Porson's writing his letters to Travis, he was a young man, and not a theologian by profession."

In connection with the question concerning St. Cyprian and other writers of the African Church, reference should be made, before concluding this brief historical sketch, to the publication at Rome, in 1835, of "Two Letters on some parts of the Controversy concerning 1 John v. 7, containing also an Inquiry into the origin of the First Latin Version of Scripture, commonly called the *Itala*, by Nicholas Wiseman, D.D." The primary object of the writer was to call attention to "two later manuscripts, of a date anterior to any hitherto attributed to those

containing the verse by the opposers of its genuineness ; which, however," would "be shown to contain it." In regard to the disputed verse, he remarks that "it has been sufficiently observed by all writers upon the controversy, that almost all the testimonies in favour of the verse are African. St. Cyprian, Marcus Celedensis, St. Fulgentius, Victor Vitensis, the four hundred bishops assembled under Hunneric at Carthage, were all members of the African Church. Maximus the Confessor learnt the passage from the same country ; Eucherius was a Spaniard, and his text is too uncertain to be quoted ; Phœbadius was a monk of Lerins ; both, therefore, probably in communication with the African Church. But while so many authors have observed this consent of writers belonging to one Church, they have not placed their testimony in its proper light. They have

spoken of them as so many African writers, or even as the body of the African Church, bearing witness to the existence of a passage, but not as the representatives of the African *recension* or *text*; as the voice of a great critical family, whose antiquity and authority, as compared with that of other texts, must be critically examined." In the question, therefore, between two recensions, the African and the Italian, which latter was used by St. Augustine, if it should appear highly probable or even certain that the Latin translation was really made in Africa, and that consequently the African text, preserved by the writers of that Church, ascends to a higher antiquity, not only than the Italian, but than any Greek manuscript in existence, we gain an argument much more compact, defined, and solid, for the authenticity of the controverted verses than by the rival balancing of quota-

tions and texts." The learned writer proceeds "to lay before biblical critics some specific proofs, tending, in his opinion, to demonstrate that Africa is the birthplace of the Latin Version." He "finds a strong ground of historical probability that the first Latin Version was not made in Italy, but in Africa." "We have positive proof," he says, "in the quotations of African writers, that such a version did exist in their country before the fourth century." He proves it by what he observes must be "the most satisfactory method of determining the country of the Vulgate," namely, "by an examination of its words and phrases."

"The result" of a careful examination "is, that Africa was the birthplace of the Vulgate, and consequently the African recension represents its oldest type, and is far superior in authority to the Italian. Thus it gives us

the assurance that in the primary translation the verse existed, and that, if the Italian Fathers had it not, it was from its having been lost in their recension. We are thus led to conclude"—this is the result to which he comes—"that the manuscripts used in making this version possessed the verse; and these were necessarily manuscripts of far greater antiquity than any we can now inspect."

APPENDIX III.

VARIOUS CONSIDERATIONS.

SINCE the first announcement of the intended publication of these pages, several suggestions have been offered, one or two of which may here be conveniently presented to the reader:—

1. Bishop Abraham writes :—I venture to suggest (if it has not already occurred to you) that no sufficient explanation, nor any indeed, as far as my observation goes, has been given of the article $\tau\delta$ with $\epsilon\nu$ in the 8th verse. It would naturally imply that the word $\epsilon\nu$ had just preceded.

2. The Rev. John James writes :—

“There is one point which has lately presented itself to me as heightening the probability

of an early transcriber's inadvertent prætermision, and which (if it has not occurred to you) you might be glad to have introduced.

“And it is this, that the Alexandrine MS. exhibits two other instances of inadvertent prætermision in the very same chapter, which I will recite—

“I *John* v. 3.

“The first clause of this verse—viz. : *αὕτη γάρ ἐστιν ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἵνα τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ τηρῶμεν*, is entirely prætermitted per incuriam in the Alexandrine MS. : and why ? Because the last-preceding words of the second verse are identical with the concluding words of the prætermitted clause, and that the transcriber's eye, on recurring to the passage, alighted inadvertently upon the second recurrence of the words, and so resumed his transcript with the next ensuing words ; *καὶ αἱ ἐντολαὶ αὐτοῦ βαρεῖαι οὐκ εἰσίν*,

“ I *John* v. 15.

“The first clause of this verse also—viz.: καὶ ἂν οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀκούει ἡμῶν is prætermitted in the Alexandrine MS.; evidently per incuriam: and why? Because the last words of verse fourteen are identical with the concluding words of this clause, and the transcriber’s eye, on his resuming the transcript, caught sight, inadvertently, of the secondly recurrent words, and so naturally continued with the words next ensuing—viz.: ὁ ἂν αἰτώμεθα, κ. τ. λ. Query.—Why should not the same inadvertence account for the prætermision of verse seven in the earlier MSS. or MS. to which the Alexandrine, Vatican, and Sinaitic, as well as other uncial and cursive MSS. owe their origin?

“For the case is precisely the same. The words, ὁ πατήρ, ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἓν εἰσιν, are (inadvertently) prætermitted: and why? Because the words proxi-

mately antecedent to them—viz.: *τρῆς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες*, are identical with those which recur immediately after them; and the transcriber's eye, on resuming his transcript, inadvertently rested on the secondly recurrent words, and proceeded naturally with the proximately ensuing words, *τὸ πνεῦμα, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ αἷμα*.

[“N.B. The omission of the words, *ἐν τῇ γῇ*, might be accounted for by the transcriber not seeing any occasion for them, having overlooked *ἐν τῇ οὐρανῷ* in the previously omitted clause. This conjecture, however, implies perhaps a charge of more than incuria. It is perhaps significant, what Griesbach seems to state—viz.: That “in terrâ” is found in some Latin MSS. which omit verse seven—implying the presence in some more ancient MS. of a correlative “in cœlo,” and of an entire correlative sentence, as having originally existed.

But upon this point I should be very glad to know your view.]

“Meanwhile, there are one or two other points of which I am anxious to express the great importance :—

“(1) It is surely a palmary proof—a τεκμήριον—of the original presence in the passage of verse seven, that its presence is the only possible way of accounting for the use of the three masculine words, *τρῆς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες*, before the three neuter substantives, *τὸ πνεῦμα, καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, καὶ τὸ αἷμα*.

“Had not verse seven pre-existed, and so authorized their reiteration, they would necessarily have been written, *τρία ἐστὶ τὰ μαρτυροῦντα*, would they not ?

“(2) Those who maintain the exclusion of verse seven, are fond of saying that, ‘in inquiries of this kind we must, to use Bentley’s words, indulge nothing to any conjecture.’

“ Nevertheless, they themselves conjecture as follows : ‘ It is not improbable that, as a security to the faith, the dogma of the great Teacher was recorded in the margin of the Latin MSS., and that it so may have glided into the text.’

“ Query.—Which is the most probable ? This conjecture, which implies, if it does not attribute, *mala fides* and conscious tampering with the text to the interpolator ; or that conjecture which simply attributes to the transcriber a pardonable inadvertence and a common form of incuria, of which two parallel instances occur in the Alexandrine context of the very same chapter ?

“ I am well aware that those who have had brought before them the anomalous use of the masculine, as applied, without intervention of verse seven, to three neuters, are ready to plead that, τὸ πνεῦμα means τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, who

being a person demands the masculine gender for His adjectivals. But surely, τὸ πνεῦμα, in that place, as in the corresponding passages of St. John's Gospel (xix. 30, 34, 35), means the human spirit, 'ghost,' of our blessed Lord, as *given up* in the way so remarkably described by St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, even as 'the water and the blood,' mean what came forth from His side in the same hour of His decease.

"It may not be amiss to add that, in spite of the Authorized Version, and the Revised Version, printing the word in 1 John v. 6-8 * with a capital S, those verses are printed with small 's' in Bishop Turton's article on the text (*Quarterly Review*, vol. xxxiii.), in which he advocates the exclusion of the text. Also

* Verse seven showing the Godhead; verse eight, the Manhood; and both being logically the outcome of the two-fold argument of the apostle, as stated chap. iv. vss. 2 and 15.

that ‘Henry Vaughan, Silurist,’ in his poem or hymn for Trinity Sunday, so (correctly) understood it:—

“‘O holy, blessed, glorious Three
Eternal witnesses that be,
In heaven, one God in Trinitie.
As here on earth, where men withstood,
The spirit, water, and the blood
Made my Lord’s *Incarnation* good.’”

3. The Note of Grotius, referred to in Chapter IV. is here subjoined:—

“Tantum dicam manuscriptum illud antiquissimum cujus auctoritate plurimum utor, non aliud hic habere quam ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες—καὶ τὸ αἷμα non adjecto illo quod et Syrus et Arabs legêre, καὶ οἱ τρεῖς ἔν εἰσι, Ego hanc quam posui lectionem et quæ a multis confirmatur libris veteribus, veram puto. Neque vero (*supple* puto?) Arianis ablatas voces quasdam sed potius additas, unde colligerent Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum non esse unum nisi consensu, quo-

modo spiritus, aqua et sanguis in unum testimonium consentiunt. Quod cum viderent Catholici, abstulisse (puto) quidem eos illud quod de Patre, Filio, et Spiritu Sancto insertum fuerat, sed reliquisse illud “tres unum esse,” quia id ita positum ipsis nocere non poterat. Alios vero (puto) relicto illo loco de Patre, Filio, et Spiritu Sancto, ibi quidem posuisse “unum sunt;” de Spiritu vero, aqua, et sanguine, “in unum sunt” ut alius modus unitatis significaretur.”

ADDENDUM.

DURING the passage of these sheets through the press, Dr. Farrar's new work on *The Early Days of Christianity* has made its appearance. It is a misfortune for those who incline to the view advocated in the present work, that so popular a writer gives the weight of his authority upon the other side. Speaking of the disputed verse, he says, "It was unknown to any of the Greek Fathers before the thirteenth century" (vol. ii. p. 458). But is this so? There is no doubt about its occurring in the Greek *Disputation against Arius*.* That *Disputation* may or may not be the genuine work of Athanasius, of whose col-

* See Chapter VI. of the present work.

lected works it forms a part : its precise authorship we are not concerned to argue for the purpose of the present question : but it is rather too much to ask us to believe that it is a work of the thirteenth century.*

Again, he says of the verse that “in the East it was never once used in the Arian Controversy.” One part of the argument in the foregoing pages has been directed to this point.† It is surely conceivable that the Catholic party refrained from putting the verse forward, because (as Aquinas saw) it might so easily from the nature of its context have been turned against them.

Further, Dr. Farrar affirms of our verse, that “it is omitted in all Greek Manuscripts before the sixteenth century.” But if we turn ten pages back in his book we learn from himself that even this formidable fact is not

* P. 56 *supra*.

† See Chapter III.

necessarily fatal. He has to discuss (p. 448) another alleged intrusion into St. John's Epistle; and, this time in defence of the supposed intruder, his words are these:—"At first sight it might seem to be fatal to the reading, that it is not found in any existing Manuscript. This fact must perhaps suffice to exclude it from any accepted text of the Greek Testament,* yet this seems to me to be exactly one of those cases in which the reading of existing MSS. is outweighed by other authorities and other considerations." Now, we have here the admission of a competent scholar, that, overwhelming as the absence of a reading from all existing manuscripts may seem to be, there may, nevertheless, be other considerations which outweigh it. That is exactly what we say about the disputed verse

* Nevertheless, it is admitted into the margin of the Revised Version.

of the Three Witnesses. We admit its absence from the manuscripts, but we plead that there are other considerations which might fairly have protected it, not perhaps against Dr. Farrar's adverse opinion, but at least against the contemptuous silence of the Revised Version.

Once more, Dr. Farrar speaks of "the gross immorality of defending a passage manifestly spurious because of its doctrinal usefulness." But why drag the "gross immorality" into the calm atmosphere of what is after all a very nice and subtle literary discussion, in which there is avowedly something to be said on both sides? Those who differ from this able writer are equally convinced with himself that the doctrine of the Trinity is perfectly safe without the verse. Indeed, if there is any soundness in the statement of Aquinas, cited in the preceding

paragraphs, the doctrine of the Consubstantiality in the Trinity is even safer without the verse than with it. Take the verse by itself and no doubt there is a gain to Church doctrine in having the Three Persons explicitly named together : but take the verse in connection with the next, and the Arian will at once be free to argue that just as the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood are not one in substance, but only “in consensu,” so you cannot fairly affirm more of the Three in the parallel of the preceding verse.

It may be well to set alongside this the language which Dr. Farrar adopts in another part of what most readers will agree to call his very attractive work. This time he is not, as in the case of the disputed verse of St. John, the assailant, but himself inclined to be the defender. He has to consider another of the vexed questions of Scriptural learning—

the genuineness of the Second Epistle of St. Peter. Just as in the case of St. John's verse, great names may be cited both for and against its genuineness: and Dr. Farrar says (vol. i. p. 174), "although it is discourteous and unwarrantable to pronounce the Epistle to be so certainly spurious that nothing but prejudice or ignorance could maintain its genuineness, neither ought its defenders to argue as though any hesitation as to its genuineness was an impious arraignment of the Spirit of God." Precisely so. That is the tone of expression which properly belongs to the question of St. Peter's authorship no less than to that of St. John's—the tone which, if it only prevail, will the most brilliantly exhibit the truly scientific spirit of English scholarship, and which, we may be sure, will in the end carry conviction to the hearts of the English people.

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βαρέομαι.

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παιδεῖα.

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He that is mighty hath done to
me great things ; and holy
is his name.

Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among
the gods ? who is like thee, glorious in
holiness, fearful in praises, doing won-
ders ?—Among the gods there is none
like unto thee, O Lord : neither are
there any works like unto thy works.—
Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and
glorify thy name ? for thou only art
holy.—Hallowed be thy name.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel ;
for he hath visited and redeemed his
people.

Who is this that cometh from Edom,
with dyed garments from Bozrah ? this
that is glorious in his apparel, travelling
in the greatness of his strength ? I that
speak in righteousness, mighty to save.
—I have laid help upon one that is
mighty ; I have exalted one chosen out
of the people.

Now unto him that is able to do ex-
ceeding abundantly above all that we
ask or think, according to the power
that worketh in us, . . be glory.

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